



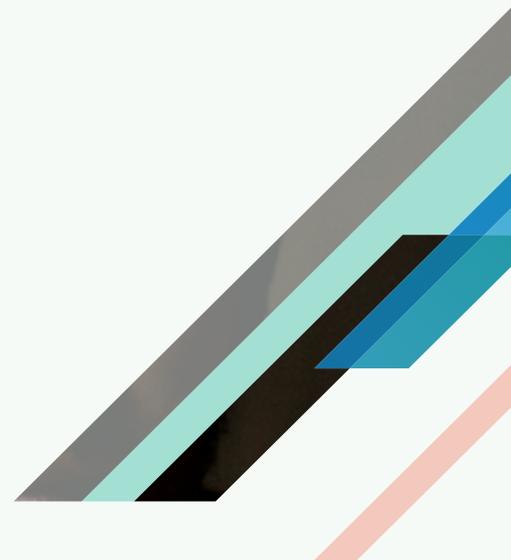
REGIONAL NEEDS OVERVIEW 2022

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Executive Summary

The Syria refugee crisis remains the largest humanitarian and development crises in the world. Across the five main Syrian-refugee hosting countries included under the 3RP – Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt – over 20 million people need some form of humanitarian and resilience support going into 2022. This includes some 7.1 million Syrian refugees¹ and asylum seekers of other nationalities and stateless persons, and 12.9 million impacted host community members, which is the highest number of people in need of some form of assistance in this crisis, in nearly a decade.

Alongside the record numbers of people in need, the level of vulnerability among refugees and impacted host community members is growing. The 3RP countries continue to be significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and its multiple waves, as well as associated socio-economic challenges, some of which pre-date the pandemic. At the macro level, economic forecasts for 3RP countries in 2021 and beyond have been shifted to slow growth compared to those in 2020. However, especially in Lebanon, where compounding crises have had devastating effects, GDP has diminished in 2021. Rises in levels of unemployment, multidimensional poverty, and food insecurity are among the greatest factors driving individual need in the short-term. The high youth population across the region places pressures on the limited capacities in the education and livelihoods sectors. Additional demographic pressures are a result of worsening social cohesion due to competition over limited resources, services, and opportunities. At a time where the social fabric is under pressure, violence against women and risks of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) continue to be reported across the region. Moreover, the broader health impacts driven by COVID-19 will also entail long term consequences for the most vulnerable people.

Three key underlying trends continue to drive the needs of refugees, and host countries and communities: the effects of large-scale protracted displacement, socio-economic conditions, and demographic pressures. These interlinked trends continue to impact existing structural and individual vulnerabilities and, in some cases, create new vulnerabilities. The trends have also deepened pre-existing inequalities, such as gender inequality.

This 3RP Regional Needs Overview (RNO) provides a consolidated overview of the needs and vulnerabilities of refugees and impacted host community members at both the regional- and country-level. It is based on data and information gathered through assessments and studies conducted throughout 2021 and intended to inform 3RP regional- and country-level planning for 2022, as well as further research and policy efforts. It begins with an analysis of the key overarching trends affecting refugees and host communities in 3RP countries. It then follows with an assessment of the needs and vulnerabilities, in terms of what support is needed and to whom to address the challenges faced, and then goes more in depth on country analyses which examines specific country data at a closer level.

More information is available on the 3RP regional and country websites, including detailed needs analyses

 www.3rpsyriacrisis.org

TURKEY

3,721,057

Syrians under temporary protection



| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Total number of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons (Includes 3,798,361 Syrians in need) | In need 4,131,541 |
| Host community members | 8,500,000 |

LEBANON

851,717

registered Syrian refugees



| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Total number of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons (Includes 1,500,000 Syrians in need) | In need 1,707,700 |
| Host community members | 1,500,000 |

IRAQ

249,733

registered Syrian refugees



| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Total number of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons (Includes 247,549 Syrians in need) | In need 289,716 |
| Host community members | 231,938 |

JORDAN

670,364

registered Syrian refugees



| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Total number of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons (Includes 670,748 Syrians in need) | In need 758,158 |
| Host community members | 520,000 |

EGYPT

134,952

registered Syrian refugees



| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Total number of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons (Includes 149,497 Syrians in need) | In need 300,000 |
| Host community members | 2,171,200 |

REGIONAL TOTAL

5,627,823

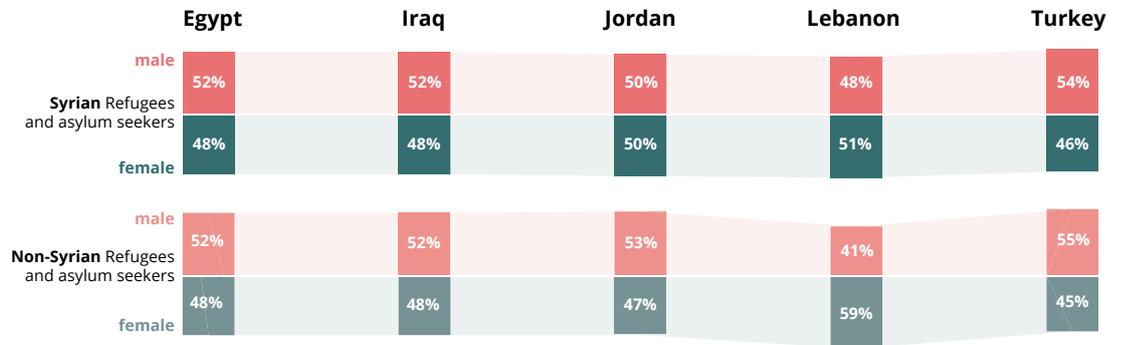
registered Syrian refugees

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Total number of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons (Includes 6,366,155 Syrians in need) | In need 7,187,115 |
| Host community members | 12,923,138 |

Note: Egypt, Iraq Jordan from 30 Sept; Lebanon 31 May; Turkey 14 Oct. (as of 25 Oct Data Portal)

Demographics

GENDER

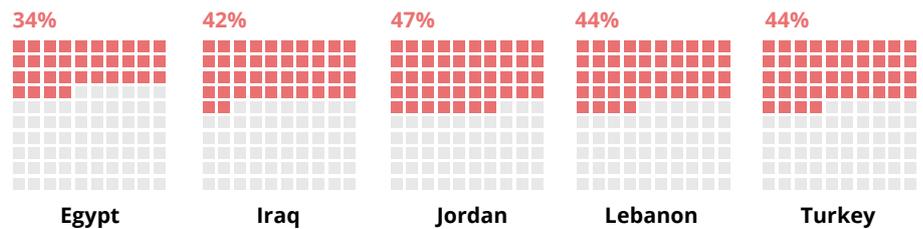


CHILDREN (UNDER THE AGE 18)



47% (2,6 million) of the registered Syrian refugees are children under the age of 18 years old.

Refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons: Percentage of children below the age of 18



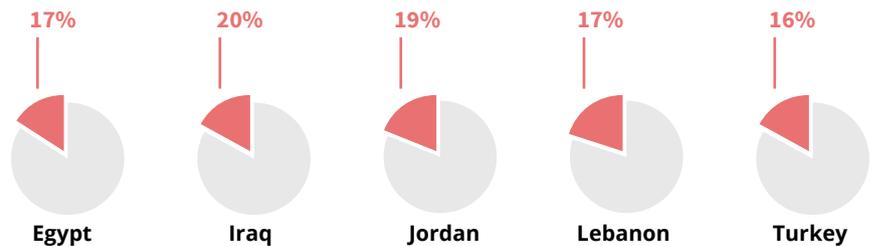
Source: The number is calculated based on refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons registered with UNHCR and Government of Turkey.

YOUTH (ages 15 - 24)



Syrian refugee youth aged between 15 and 24 years old constitute around 20% of the total registered Syrian population in the five countries. Similar trend is observed in the host countries.

Percentage of youth in host countries



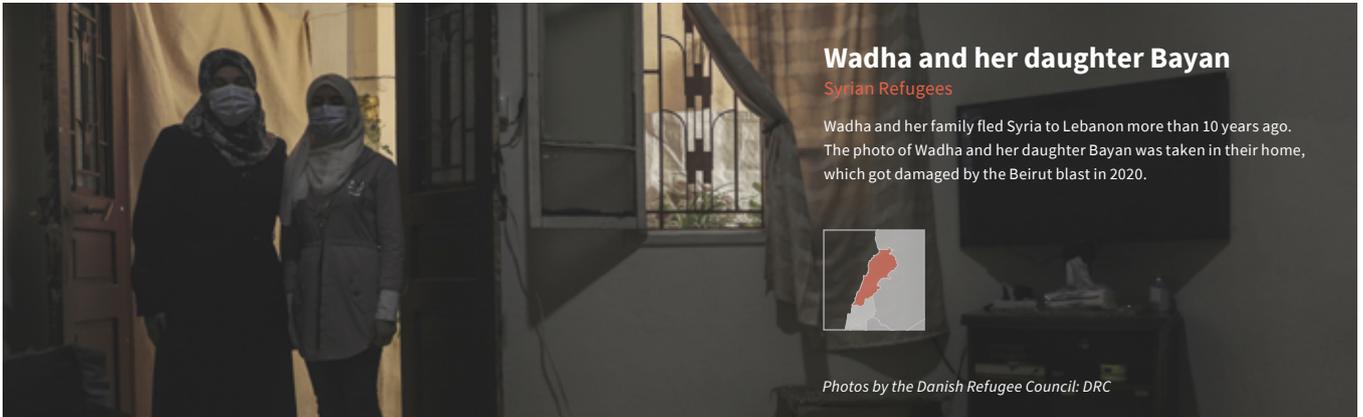
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



It is estimated that women with disabilities are up to **10 times more likely** to experience **sexual violence** than women without disabilities and have severe access challenges to most shelters.²



Voices of Refugees & Host Communities



Wadha and her daughter Bayan

Syrian Refugees

Wadha and her family fled Syria to Lebanon more than 10 years ago. The photo of Wadha and her daughter Bayan was taken in their home, which got damaged by the Beirut blast in 2020.



Photos by the Danish Refugee Council: DRC

Still struggling one year after the Beirut explosion

Even before the explosion, the economic situation was taking its toll on Wadha and her family. “My husband was barely able to find work and we were kicked out of our previous house,” said Wadha. Without a place to live, nor enough money to rent a new apartment, Wadha and her daughter went to stay with a female friend and her husband took their three sons and moved in with a friend of his.

Soon after, with their eldest son working to help his father support the family, they were finally able to rent a new house. Their happiness, however, was short-lived when merely four months later, the Beirut explosion happened, leaving Wadha injured and their house in ruins. “We heard the explosion sound and then in a second, all the glass around us shattered,” she added.

After that day, Wadha and her children all struggled mentally with fear.

“It took us a while to be able to leave the house, and even when we did, we were in constant fear.”

said Wadha.

As the family moved on, Wadha’s daughter, 13-year-old Bayan, continued to struggle. “She would get agitated whenever I mentioned going out. She would not even go out to the street,” she added sadly.



Ahmad

Jordanian

Photo of Ahmad at his father’s automotive maintenance shop which provides the main and only income to the family



Photo by UNDP Jordan

Persons with disability are subjected to exclusion within their communities and this limits their participation and the services available to them in their community.

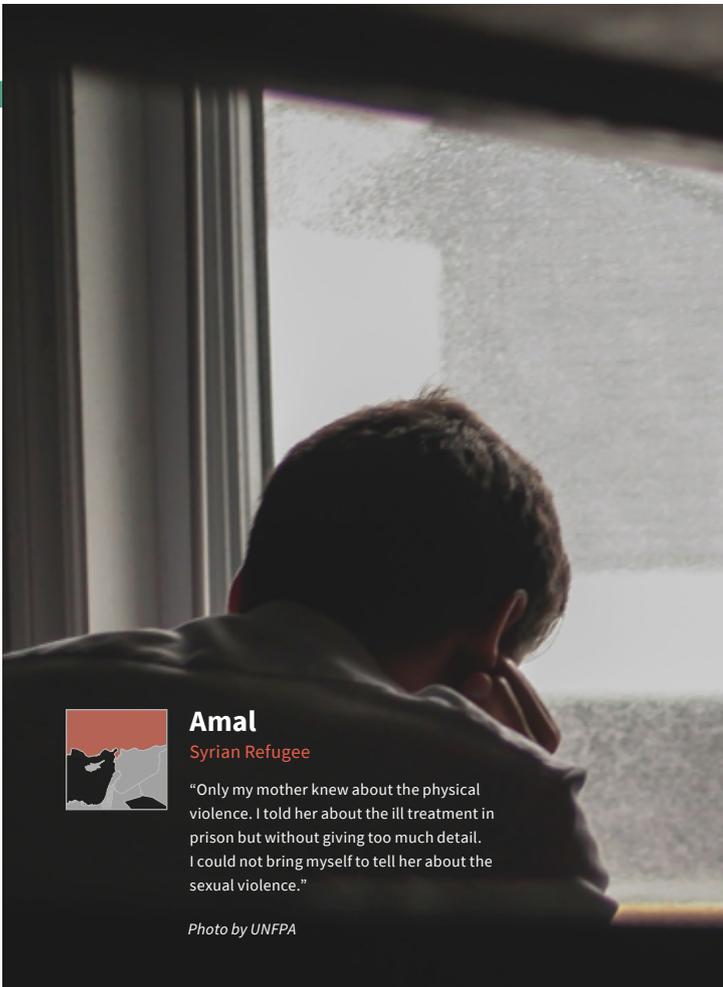
Ahmad, a 20 year’s old young man from Amman, Jordan, who lives with his father, mother, and 14-year-old sister, didn’t have the opportunity to pursue his university education after he completed high school for several societal and financial reasons.

His family struggled with his disability especially within a society that categorizes disability as a social stigma.

“It wasn’t easy to raise a child with a disability as they face multiple forms of exclusion but the only aspect me and his mother were worried about is how the society would accept him and how his future would be.”

said Ahmad’s father.

Although huge progress has been made towards equal and inclusive societies, persons with disabilities are still too often neglected.



Amal
Syrian Refugee

“Only my mother knew about the physical violence. I told her about the ill treatment in prison but without giving too much detail. I could not bring myself to tell her about the sexual violence.”

Photo by UNFPA

“I attribute most of the sexual problems I have to the terrible things I experienced in prison.”, explains Amal, a 31 year-old Syrian refugee who came to Turkey from Syria with his family in 2014.

His story is the untold story of many young men caught in armed conflicts who have been subjected to sexual violence. “With the ongoing shortage of men and materials, tensions ran high, and the commander eventually resorted to physical violence to keep people in check.” The seemingly perpetual extension of his military service, the unrelenting physical violence, and the constantly present fear of death became too much to bear for Amal. He tried to escape and was captured, marking the beginning of a harrowing experience in prison, where he was brutally interrogated, beaten, and sexually assaulted.

“For about six months — maybe less, maybe more, because in prison we never really had a concept of time — I experienced all kinds of violence. Abuse, beating, rape. They told us that if we do not do what they want, they would rape us. I thought they would not do that, but they did.”

Amal says.

Although he finally managed to escape, the physical and sexual violence to which he was subjected still affects his life today. “Even if a lifetime passes, I still won’t be able to forget,” he says.



Khaldieh
Syrian Refugee

Story by WeWorld Global;
Part of the “Stuck in Time” series
Photos by Francesca Volpi

“We struggle to access some services such as electricity, water and the toilets. I am scared of going out at night because there is no electricity, it is difficult for me.”

Khaldine is finding it difficult to cope with daily hardships, but her biggest concern is her son’s future.

“My future hopes concern my son, I hope he will be able to go to school, get an education and a better future, but what can I say? ,”



Regional Context Analysis

Introduction

The needs of refugees and their host communities in the 3RP countries are shaped by several key regional trends, including the large-scale displacement, socio-economic challenges and demographic changes and social pressures.

Despite the scale of these challenges throughout a decade of displacement, host countries, institutions, and communities continue to provide asylum and services to more than 5.6 million Syrian refugee³ women, men and children, as well as refugees of other nationalities, stateless persons and other persons of concern.

The unprecedented political, economic, and social situation across the region, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and other myriad challenges, has underscored the need for sustained support to host governments, host communities, refugees, and other persons of concern.

This section provides a regional overview for each of these key trends which shape needs and vulnerabilities across the region

Estimated Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Women in the Arab Region

With the largest gender gap in human development in the world, the situation for women and girls in Arab States has always been challenging.

UNFPA's programme data shows that girls in humanitarian settings face a web of violence throughout the course of their lives. Denial of resources and opportunities, restrictions on movement, harassment, child and serial marriages, internet-related risks such as online harassment and sextortion, and many other forms of GBV are daily realities for many.⁴

However, the pandemic has exacerbated these already high levels of violence - including sexual violence, gender-based violence, and exploitation - against women and girls and interrupting women's engagement in the labour market. In a study conducted by UN Women during the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly one in three women reported that they felt unsafe in their homes, fearing intimate partner or/ and domestic violence.

Socioeconomic challenges facing women have also been exacerbated. Women's employment has also faced extreme pressures, both in the labour market - with women often within sectors hardest hit by the pandemic such as informal sectors - and outside it - in roles such as care giving. Syrian refugee women have consistently faced difficulties meeting their basic needs - from education and shelter to health care, mental health, and psychosocial support (MHPSS) - and those of their families due to challenges around their legal status, their skills, social norms, and language barriers. Such challenges and shocks result in harmful gender-specific coping mechanisms such as child marriage, child labour, girls dropping out of school to help with housework, women overloaded with house and work-related chores, men controlling decisions over loans taken by women as well as sexual exploitation and abuse.

Particularly vulnerable women include refugees, women working in the informal sector, women and girls who have been impacted by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), SOGIESC⁵, persons with disabilities, and older persons.



Particularly vulnerable women include refugees, women working in the informal sector, women & girls who have been impacted by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), SOGIESC, persons with disabilities, and older persons.

Large-scale Displacement

Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt continue to host over 5.6 million Syrian refugee women, men and children as of September 2021. The registered Syrian refugee population remained relatively stable throughout the year and there was no major arrival of new refugees into the host countries in 2020 as borders and admission practices remained closely managed by host states.

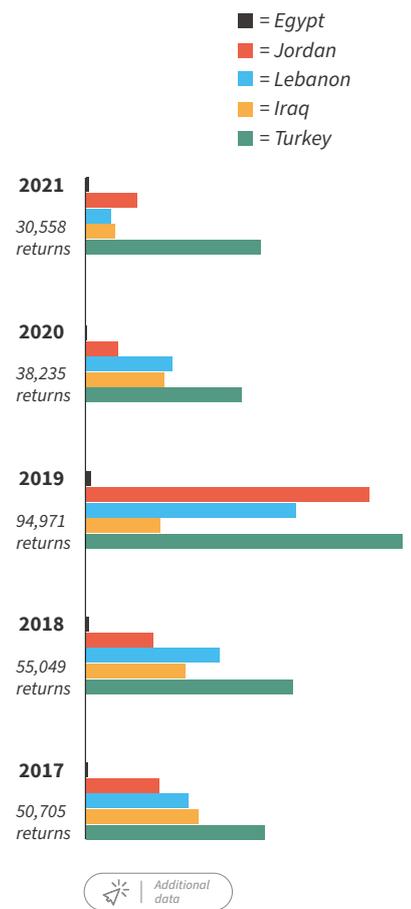
It is expected that the refugee population will remain stable throughout 2022. Return dynamics in 2021 have remained similar to the second half of 2020, and less than half compared to 2019. The findings of UNHCR’s sixth intention survey in March 2021 indicate that large-scale spontaneous returns from host countries are unlikely to take place in the coming year. An observation has been made that there was a slight increase in return from Jordan Egypt and Turkey and a significant decline for Iraq and Lebanon compared to the previous year. The latest round of the regional intention survey, similar to the previous years, indicates that most Syrians continue to wish to return to Syria one day but only a small fraction (2.4 per cent) intends to do so by early-2022.

Women, men, and children refugees continue to consider concerns over safety and security, livelihood opportunities, access to shelter and basic services inside Syria as primary barriers to return. The slight decrease in the short term intention

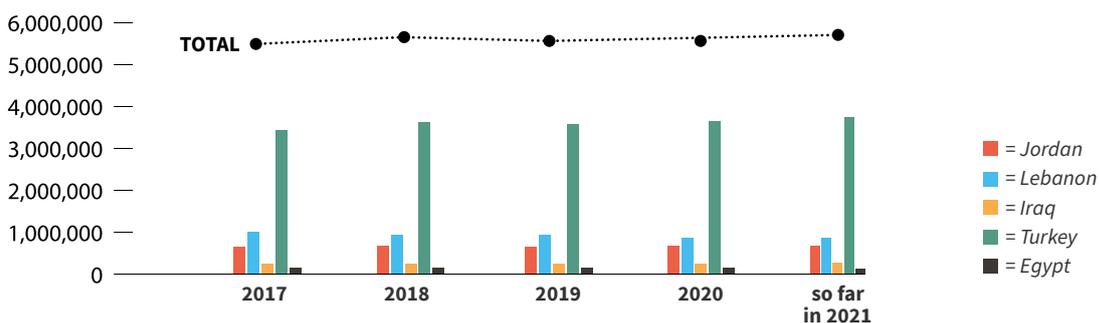
to return is at least in part linked to a perceived deterioration of the situation inside Syria since 2019. Although 90 per cent of Syrian refugees surveyed cannot meet their basic needs in host countries, this was not seen as acting as a significant push factor as well as the immediate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic only impacted the decision of small per centage of refugees.

According to estimates, Syrians remain the largest refugee population globally in need of resettlement in 2021 while there has been a global decrease in the number of resettlement places available mainly attributed to a shifting of resettlement opportunities to other global priority situations. Given that the resettlement needs far outnumber the resettlement spaces – with an estimated 579,031 Syrian refugees currently in need of resettlement, vulnerable refugees remain in host countries for longer, and result in increased pressure on assistance programmes and vital services.

Regional Return Trends



Persons of Concern to UNHCR



Socio-economic Challenges

Economic forecasts for 3RP countries have been progressively revised downwards since early 2020. This in large part results from spillover effects from COVID-19, as measures to contain the pandemic include movement restrictions, trade barriers, and reduced working hours affecting small businesses and casual labor.

The negative economic growth observed during 2020 has been reversed to positive economic growth in most 3RP countries, but at slow rates.⁶ During 2020, most 3RP countries confronted economic recessions, and rising levels of unemployment and poverty exacerbated in some countries by high inflationary pressures and important fiscal challenges. Reports indicate that this has impacted women and young people the most. Meanwhile, reports from country analysis present that food insecurity has worsened in the region and harmful coping mechanisms (by reducing food intake) have been applied by vulnerable households. These trends have not been reversed in 2021.

During 2021, as economies have slowly opened up and businesses and trades have gradually resumed globally and regionally, slow economic recovery has been seen in 3RP countries (see table 1). However, unemployment rates in the region remain high, particularly in Jordan and Iraq where rates have been higher than 2020 and in particular for youth, and challenges remain for government revenues.

Equally, poverty rates have increased across the sub-region. In December 2020, to assess the welfare impact, UNHCR and the World Bank launched a joint Study (funded by the Joint Data Center) aimed at identifying changes in poverty amongst Syrian refugees and host communities, with a focus on Jordan, KRI and Lebanon. The study's projections have been further updated in 2021. Establishing the joint effect of COVID-19, and of other compounding crises on welfare, has implications for the response both as the

pandemic unfolds, during the recovery period and in terms of maintaining social cohesion. The Study helped guide the COVID-19 responses of governments, international agencies and others. The Study relied on dynamic simulations to show changes in poverty (measured at the international \$5.50 poverty line) on a monthly basis. The poverty impact is modelled by relating macroeconomic changes in various sectors of the economy, informality status, changes in remittances and price levels to household characteristics. The models reveal changes in poverty amongst host and refugee communities and estimate the poverty reducing effects of government and UNHCR assistance. Key data from the study is presented below.



In Lebanon, changes in poverty are largely driven by inflation. At the

national poverty line, poverty among the Lebanese community is expected to have increased by 33 percentage points (p.p.) by 2020, and by 46 p.p. by end of 2021, compared to baseline. Syrian refugees start at higher poverty rate, and observe an increase of around 24 p.p. These estimates are slightly lower if households are assumed to mitigate the impact of price changes on their welfare through behavioral responses, such as changing their consumption patterns by substituting for cheaper goods.⁷



In Jordan, the COVID-19 crisis increased poverty by around 38 per

centage points (p.p.) among Jordanians, and by 18 p.p. among Syrian refugees, noting that refugees started off at a higher rate of poverty at baseline.



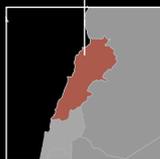
In KRI, hosts, refugees, and IDPs faced a similar starting level of poverty prior to the onset of COVID and experienced increases of 24 p.p., 21 p.p., and 28 p.p.

Table 1: GDP Growth

| | EGY | KRI | JOR | LEB | TUR |
|--|-------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| Real GDP growth in 2019 | 5.1 % | 6 % | 2.2 % | -5.4 % | 0.9 % |
| Real GDP growth in 2020 | 2.5 % | -15.7 % | -1.4 % | -17 % | 1.8 % |
| Real GDP growth in 2021 (estimated) | 2 % | 2.6 % | 1.8 % | -8.5 % | 8.5 % |
| Real GDP growth in 2022 (forecast) | 4.9 % | 7.3 % | 2.2 % | n/a | 3 - 4 % |

In particular, Lebanon is facing an unprecedented economic and financial crisis that has undermined the subsistence capacity of already vulnerable Lebanese and refugees. Lebanon's GDP plummeted from about US\$55 billion in 2018 to a projected US\$20.5 billion in 2021, while real GDP per capita fell by 37.1%. The real GDP is projected to decline by 10.5% in 2021, on the back of a 21.4 contraction in 2020⁹. Lebanon has seen significantly increasing poverty rates (on some measures almost doubling)⁹ and inflation rates since 2019, the latter particularly in food items, alongside shortages in fuel, electricity and medicines. Furthermore, according to the 2020 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR), 89 per cent of Syrian refugee families live in extreme poverty, increasing from 55 per cent only a year before, with even worse conditions for female-headed households, while over half of the Lebanese population is poor.¹⁰ The recovery from multi-faced crises is expected to take years.

A socio-economic survey conducted by UNRWA in 2020 found that **87.3%** of Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) live below the absolute poverty line and 11.3 per cent exist in a state of abject poverty



“All my daughter is asking for is to officially be a refugee!”

Scores of people, including children, died in recent years because of these electricity lines. Today, it is home to about 20,000 people. UNRWA – a partner UN agency – is the main service provider in Lebanon’s 12 camps where about 115,000 people live. UNICEF estimates half are children, two thirds live in poverty. UNICEF estimates that within four weeks, 4 million people are at risk of having no water as water pumping will gradually cease across the country mainly due to fuel shortages. We passed by the Haifa Hospital, the only hospital available in the camp. (UNICEF – UNRWA LEBANON)

Photo by UNICEF Lebanon / Juliette Touma

Palestine Refugees

Palestine refugees affected by the Syria crisis remain particularly vulnerable and are exposed to substantial humanitarian and protection risks.

Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS), who have fled the country and are currently in Lebanon and Jordan, continue to face a precarious and marginalized existence due to their uncertain legal status and limited social protection mechanisms. Data from internal UNRWA monitoring mechanisms indicates that an increasing number of Palestine refugees in Lebanon were unable to cover their basic needs in 2021 as a consequence of the deep socio-economic crisis faced by the country, compounded by the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. Mounting food insecurity has meant that many Palestine refugees are forced to employ increasingly harmful coping mechanisms to meet their families’ basic needs. In Jordan, high unemployment rates, in particular among youth, and the protracted socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 have increased the vulnerability of PRS families and most vulnerable Palestine refugees in Jordan. This includes approximately 174,564 Palestine refugees “ex-Gazans” and 156 Palestine refugees from Iraq. The situation is further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacted a heavy socio-economic and public health toll.



[Read More](#)

Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of populations drives institutional, environmental, and social pressures across the 3RP countries. The influx of a large refugee population has, in some instances, contributed to deepening these pressures.

Three key demographic trends emerge. Firstly, 3RP countries have slightly above-average population growth rates compared to global trends¹¹, and this occurs in the context of hosting large-scale refugee populations: Turkey hosts the most refugees of any country in the world, while Lebanon hosts the most refugees per capita in the world, with Jordan among the top five countries for per capita refugees.

Secondly, children and youth constitute a high proportion of the population in 3RP countries. Over 50 per cent of the population in Egypt, Iraq and Jordan, 46 per cent in Turkey, and around 48 per cent in Lebanon are children and youth, under 24 years old.

Third, the region is characterized by an increasingly urbanized population. In most 3RP countries, the majority of the population is already urbanized, and reaches some 90 per cent in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Furthermore, this ratio continues to grow particularly as young people in rural areas move to cities or other urbanized areas in search of education and/or employment. Meanwhile, nearly 95 per cent of registered refugees continue to live in urban and peri-urban non-camp settings.

While the combination of a growing, youthful, and urbanized population has the potential to reap a dividend in terms of economic growth potential and increased productivity, it has also brought numerous stresses, particularly related to access to basic and essential services. For example, the growth in the school-aged population, compounded by the additional demand for education services from the refugee population, has put the education systems of these countries under additional pressure. Though variations exist across countries,

demographic pressures have exacerbated challenges related to the management of natural resources, particularly water and land, as well as the management of solid waste and wastewater. It has also impacted energy demand and consumption, as well as air quality with significant implications for the living conditions, health and livelihoods of populations, particularly for the most vulnerable. Meanwhile, youth unemployment becomes increasingly challenging as rates are far higher than the general unemployment rates especially for women. Demographic pressures can also increase competition in the job market, affecting wage rates and work conditions.

A key aspect related to demographic characteristics is social cohesion. Relations in and between different communities are dynamic and complex in most 3RP countries, and the influx of a large refugee population has added more layers of complexity across the region. While 3RP countries have managed to ensure a generally strong level of social cohesion during nearly a decade of hosting large-scale refugee populations, this has required significant effort and has not been without challenges. Numerous assessments point to the key sources of tensions across the region, including increased job competition, rising costs of living, and access to basic services, all issues exacerbated by the pandemic. This has created intense pressure on municipalities, including related to local service provision. These drivers can often be fueled by misperceptions, frustrations, and higher levels of stress across communities.

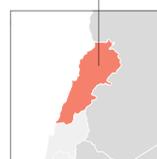
Community relations in Lebanon

Over the last three years, refugee-host community relations in Lebanon have been on a negative trajectory. In August 2021, through the regular UNDP-ARK perception surveys¹², 36 per cent of respondents reported negative inter-communal relations, as compared to 21 per cent in July 2018. This is an evidence that relationships are becoming increasingly strained, with pressure points ranging from access to services and job competition, to historical grievances between the communities. Increasingly, also, social media is being used as a platform to share, anti-refugee sentiments with inflammatory messages.

The main immediate causes to inter-communal tensions are reportedly access to cash (75 per cent) and competition for lower skilled jobs (53 per cent). Aid perception bias is high, while one fifth of the population has led at least one individual in their household lose their source of income due to the crisis.

Meanwhile, access to basic services such as electricity and health are severely strained; in August 2021, only 3.6 per cent rated the quality of electricity in their area as 'good' or better. With prices having skyrocketed and the currency having plummeted, there is a high risk that the reduction or removal of subsidies on basic commodities could further exacerbate tensions.

In terms of intra-Lebanese tensions, in August 2021, 58% of the Lebanese respondents to the UNDP-ARK Survey cited political differences as a main tension driver, compared to 33% in July 2019, followed by differences in socio-economic status¹³.



Regional Needs & Vulnerabilities

There are over 7 million refugees and 13 million vulnerable members of host communities in 3RP countries that need continuous support.

Understanding their specific needs and potentials is vital to ensuring that they can receive the required protection and assistance support.

The following section provides an overview of the key regional needs and vulnerabilities. To ensure a holistic and inter-sectoral perspective, it is presented according to the four main areas where people require support – as reflected in the 3RP regional strategic directions:

- 1. Protecting people**
- 2. Pursuing durable solutions**
- 3. Ensuring dignified lives**
- 4. Enhancing national and local capacities**

It is important to note that the needs outlined in the following pages are not exhaustive; there are a range of specific sectoral and country-level needs that have been identified. Such needs are presented in section 3 and in the relevant country-level needs documents.



Aida Al Mahoumd, a 65-year-old Lebanese host community member

Lebanon has been suffering from limited power and complications with energy generation for years which led to a rise in electricity and fossil fuel shortages causing an average of 20 hours of electricity outage per day and posing serious challenges to people's livelihoods, safety, and security.

Photo by UNDP Lebanon / Rana Sweidan

Protecting People

Syrians continue to require access to international protection and asylum. Therefore, the protection needs of Syrian refugees across the 3RP countries drive the priorities of the 3RP response.

Aside from continued access to asylum in the host countries, protection vulnerabilities related to legal status, gender, age, diverse background including SOGIESC¹⁴ and specific needs are among the most urgent needs identified in regional assessments. Such assessments also point to the fact that host community members may also face some of these protection risks in some countries. Therefore, there is a continued need for an age, gender and diversity (AGD) approach to be adopted when assessing protection needs and designing and delivering protection and assistance interventions and services.



Even after years of living in a refugee camp, Fidda still has not fully wrapped her mind around what her life looks like now. “I still do not understand how I ended up here. I still cannot believe that this is my life now,” she said.

Photo by by DRC / Martin Thaulow

Strengthening of GBV Prevention and Response through Access to Specialized Services; Mainstreaming of GBV Risk Mitigation across Sectors; and Bolstering Gender Equality.

Women and girls continue to be disproportionately at risk of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in 3RP countries although men and boys can also be affected. Individuals with diverse SOGIESC and other persons with specific needs are at heightened risk of GBV. Among the frequently reported forms of GBV affecting refugees and host communities, forced and child marriage, sexual violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, stigma, and intimate partner and domestic violence are the most common. However, economic and social stress coupled with ongoing measures related to COVID-19, have continued to heighten the risks of GBV. The pandemic and ensuing movement restrictions exacerbated existing risks of GBV and to some extent still do, with multiple 3RP countries observing an increase in reports of intimate partner and domestic violence, while also hindering access to life-saving services for survivors and other essential mental health and medical services.

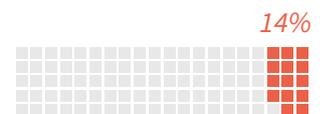
Women and girls face gender-specific barriers, particularly to education and the labour market. Displaced women are more likely to hold precarious jobs in the informal sector and, as many faced disruptions in livelihoods and income generating activities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, targeted programming is needed in this area. Individuals with diverse SOGIESC also face challenges in accessing services and the labour market. A further emphasis for sectoral approaches to gender equality and women’s empowerment is needed.



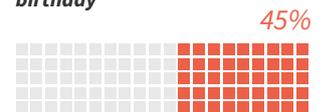
In Turkey, child marriage is a serious concern as well.

According to latest data available, the 2018 Turkey Demographic and Health Survey showed that 14 per cent of Turkish women aged 20-24 were married before 18; 45 per cent of Syrian women under temporary protection status in Turkey aged 20-24 were married by their 18th birthday, with 9 per cent of them married by 15. According to a Report by ECPAT, a network of organisations that strives to end the sexual exploitation of children, increasing numbers of Syrian families are marrying off their underage daughters for money in the wake of the coronavirus crisis. There is a need to tackle the raising of Syrian girls marriage and reduce this negative coping mechanism to protect the rights of girls to decide over their bodies.

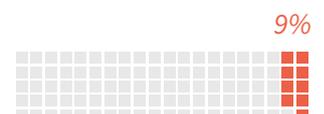
Turkish women aged 20-24 who married before the age of 18



Syrian women under temporary protection status in Turkey aged 20-24 who married by their 18th birthday



Syrian women under temporary protection status in Turkey who were married by the age of 15



Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), when referring to the form of GBV that constitutes an abuse of power by humanitarian workers against the population they are meant to protect and assist, is an ongoing risk. Although SEA can happen at any time, the risk increases during in times of crisis, including during public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic, when there is a scale-up in humanitarian response and in situations where essential needs of those most at-risk in communities are not adequately met. Women and children are particularly at risk. To ensure Accountability to the Affected Population by 3RP partners, there is a need to support measures taken to provide protection from and response to SEA by securing resources to recruit staff responsibly; provide training for staff; raise awareness among and engage with the community; strengthen complaint and feedback mechanisms in consultation with the community; reinforce reporting mechanisms, ensure provision of victim/survivor centred assistance through safe referrals to GBV response services; build capacity to conduct investigations; and appoint PSEA focal points and boost coordination networks.



[Read More](#)

As Lebanon slips deeper within its multiple crises, desperate coping mechanisms are being employed within vulnerable families. With mounting debts, some are encouraging young girls to marry.

Photo by UNICEF Lebanon / Diego-Ibarra

Child Protection Awareness and Services

Children are among the most affected by conflict and displacement, facing heightened protection risks, including physical and sexual violence, recruitment, torture, kidnapping, early marriage, child labour, family separation, lack of birth registration and continued access to services. The COVID-19 pandemic has compounded the needs of forcibly displaced children, also noting increased parental anxieties and frustrations caused by social isolation and fears around livelihoods and financial difficulties, which further aggravate tensions increasing the risk of child abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation. One of the major child protection concerns is the persistent use of child labour among refugee children and vulnerable host communities. In addition to poverty, refugee children are also affected by other determinants of child labour, such as the breakdown of social fabric of families and communities, economic crisis, and the disruption of education and training. Female-headed households face additional vulnerabilities and rely on child labour twice as much as male-headed households. Children with disabilities often live in isolated situations due to discrimination, which may result in situations where they may be exposed to additional risks, stigma, and exploitation, including child trafficking and abuse, and inadequate access to services. In some 3RP countries, the COVID-19 prevention and containment measures have forced many children to isolate in unsafe households, with limited child protection, health and education services.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS)

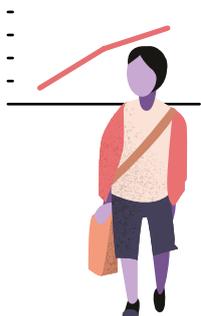
Refugees in 3RP countries may not only have experienced varying degrees of traumatic experiences prior to and during their flight, but also faced uncertainty, loss and a range of social and economic hardships in host countries that can impose additional stress. Refugees with pre-existing mental health conditions often confront even greater challenges. Children, adolescents, and youth exposed to chronic stress, violence, including GBV, are at an elevated risk of developing a mental health condition. The mental health situation in the 3RP countries, where accessibility to MHPSS for refugees is already highly challenging due to the paucity of services, socio-economic constraints, and mental-illness stigma, was further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic during which an increase in psychosocial vulnerabilities and mental health conditions was observed and spikes of self-harm and suicide instances were reported.



“I have to support my parents and my brothers. They don’t have anyone else but me.”

Eleven-year-old Syrian refugee Namaat sweeps the floor at home in Amman, Jordan. Her family fled Homs in 2013 and their dire financial situation has seen Namaat take on household duties.

Photo by UNHCR / Diego Ibarra Sánchez



Since 2019, the share of **children aged 5-17 engaged in child labour** increased from **2.7%, to 4.4% in 2020, and 5.3% in 2021.**

Additionally, and as across the years, **child labour is constantly higher among boys (8.1 per cent) than girls (2.1 per cent).**



One of the major child protection concerns is the persistent issue of **child labour among refugee children and vulnerable host communities.** In addition to poverty, refugee children are also affected by other determinants of child labour, such as the breakdown of the social fabric of families and communities, economic crises, the disruption of education and training, and most recently, the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic. In Lebanon specifically, the 2020 Beirut explosion created yet another risk factor overlaying the others.¹⁴



Multiple factors explain the increase in children engaged in labour, such as high unemployment, increase in street-connected children, poverty, poor shelter, and others. Additionally, there were challenges in accessing schools, online education, and the deteriorating economic situation all of which increase the likelihood of a child engaging in labour.



Child labour is consistently under-reported compared to observations on the field. This might be due to fear of losing humanitarian assistance.



9% of individuals were found to have a disability in Lebanon, 30% with physical or intellectual needs in Jordan and 8% in Egypt.

A study in Lebanon and Jordan showed that **“22.8 per cent of the surveyed Syrian refugees have disabilities” (1 in 5 refugees has a disability)** while estimations by the World Health Organization to be 15 per cent.¹⁵

Access and Quality of Education

At the end of 2020¹⁶, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, were hosting slightly more than 2.1 million school-aged Syrian refugee children (5-17 years old). Around two thirds of these school-aged refugee children were enrolled in education, but 41 per cent of them were out of formal and non-formal education, recording an increase compared to 2019, when the share of out-of-school refugee children was 36 per cent. The decade long war, domestic economic declines placed a tremendous stress on the overstretched education systems in both Syria and the host countries, impacting previous investments and progress made in the sector. Despite the continued efforts made by national governments, humanitarian actors and development partners, the number of out of school children in Syria and the five host countries remains high, estimated between 3.2 million and 3.6 million.

The spread of the pandemic in 2020 created an unprecedented disruption, heightened protection risks for the most vulnerable and worsened inequalities. Many children, adolescents and youth faced unequal access to distance education opportunities because they lacked internet, devices, and the necessary support services, such as language classes and psycho-social support. Additionally, suspension of school meal programmes negatively impacted children’s nutrition and health, especially those from the most vulnerable backgrounds. As the schools reopened their doors for 2020-2021 school year a substantial number of children from forcibly displaced communities remained at risk of not coming back to school or dropping out completely due to learning loss, protection issues and economic pressures encountered by their families.

While children have benefited from quality and capacity improvements made in education systems across the 3RP countries over the past decade, ensuring that inclusive and flexible education systems remain available to all children requires increased efforts along mainstreaming the refugee response in long-term education development plans.

Civil Documentation

Ensuring that Syrian refugees have access to civil documentation in 3RP countries is an essential component of the protection response to guarantee their enjoyment of basic rights. Ensuring that refugees are able to obtain, replace, and renew civil documentation remains a key need across the region, noting that many refugees arrive in neighbouring countries either without, with few or with expired documents. Civil documentation is often needed to access vital protection, government services, schools, health care and other rights and entitlements. Notably, Syrian children born abroad acquire nationality exclusively through their fathers, but in approximately one-fourth of refugee households, children have not fathers to attest to their nationality. Birth registration is therefore especially important in providing legal evidence of a child's paternity, as well as its nationality on this basis. The failure to register the birth of a Syrian child places the child at risk of statelessness. The registration of vital life events, such as births, deaths and marriages in a timely manner is also critical to avoiding more complex challenges in the future, including related to achieving

durable solutions. However, refugees often face challenges in accessing these documents, including, for example, complex and often bureaucratic procedures; a lack of awareness of requirements and processes to obtain civil documentation; limited access to legal support, inconsistencies in the application of laws and procedures. The COVID-19 pandemic, for example, also meant that people missed applications deadlines for renewals.

For Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS), specifically in Lebanon and Jordan, issues related to documentation are an added protection challenge for this vulnerable group. According to UNRWA, an estimated 51 per cent of PRS surveyed in 2021 did not have residency in Lebanon, an increase from 34 per cent in 2019. This has a significant impact on their ability to find work, access services such as education, or move freely. Similarly, in Jordan, PRS without a valid Jordanian identification document face restrictions on employment, limited access to courts, civil status and registration processes, and are continuously exposed to the risk of arrest, detention and potential forced return to Syria.



In Lebanon, “64% of children with disabilities (aged 15 to 17) and 50% (aged 6 to 14) are not attending school.”¹⁷

In Egypt, 9% of refugees aged 18 years and above are illiterate, 57% have primary or preparatory education, and almost 12% have higher education.

Disaggregation by strata, less than 5 per cent of Syrian refugees 18 years and more are illiterate, while this percentage increased to 14 per cent among other refugees.¹⁸

Community-based Protection

People with specific needs and diverse profiles continue to face challenges to access information and services, disclose their needs for protection and support, provide feedback and participate. The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the need for increased coordination and multifunctional approaches to address emerging information needs and reach all persons of concern in different settings. Opportunities are needed to enhance inclusion and participation of all community members, and ensure their equal access to asylum and protection, multisectoral services and civil rights, while preventing fraud, corruption, and other forms of misconduct.



Today in Lebanon,

an estimation of 90 per cent of Syrian refugee households with persons with disabilities live in extreme poverty¹⁹, and these households are living on less than half the Lebanese minimum wage²⁰. Among individuals with a disability, 18 per cent did not have legal residency permits and cannot access services, adopting harmful coping mechanism as reducing the number and portions of food per day.

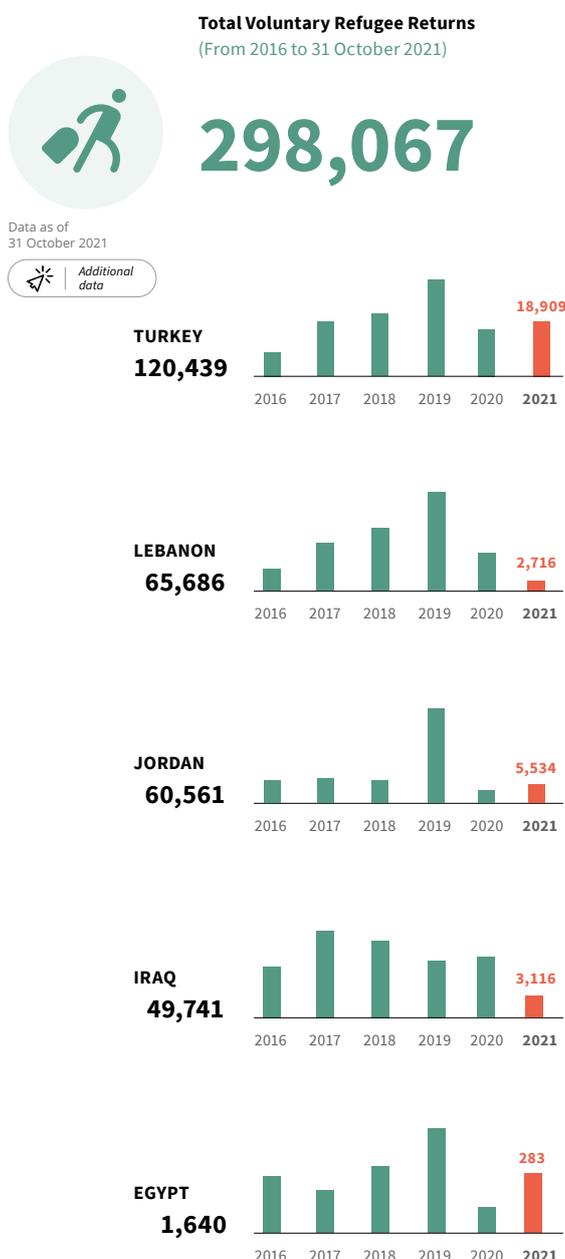


For Lebanon,

unlike in previous years (where cost of transportation was the main barrier cited), the cost of ICT devices for online learning and predictable internet connectivity and electricity are the main barriers to access to education; and this is more so for younger age groups, as devices are more available to older students. Also fear from COVID-19 has more affected students in younger age groups, where it is more challenging to abide by prevention measures than with older age groups. In some instances, the level of literacy of parents/caregivers, and more precisely their ability to manipulate electronic devices and/or online applications, is considered a barrier to access. For the above-mentioned barriers for children of compulsory school age (6-14), there is a clear gap for youth (15 years and above), with marriage being the key barrier for females and labour for males.

Pursuing Durable Solutions

Refugees continue to require access to territory, international protection and support in countries of asylum. Given the protracted nature of the crisis, opportunities for durable solutions are urgently needed so refugees can look to the future with hope and dignity.



Safe, Voluntary, and Dignified Returns

Despite barriers to returns remaining and the overall low intention of Syrian refugees in the region to return in the immediate future, tens of thousands of refugees do make the spontaneous or self-organized movement every year. The reasons are diverse, but often include personal circumstances including the wish to be closer to loved ones. The 3RP acknowledges voluntary return in safety and dignity is the fundamental right of every refugee and respects those who have made the free and informed decision to return at a time of their choice. Those who make the decision to return display a range of needs, including related to counselling, information and advice and support, assistance with documentation or other specific needs. While there is no facilitation or promotion of return, supporting those who make the decision to return is vital to ensure important protection dividends, reduce the risk of harm, and contribute to an informed and dignified return.

Resettlement and Complementary Pathways Opportunities

Syrians remain the largest refugee population globally in need of resettlement in 2022, with an estimated 592,055 Syrian refugees currently in need of resettlement. In the first half of 2021, the number of Syrians referred for resettlement was 8,105, compared to 8,932 and 16,810 in the same periods of 2020 and 2019 respectively. Although the 2021 figure represents 72 per cent against all nationalities and the total resettlement submissions from MENA and Turkey, the submission represents just 1.4 per cent against the overall resettlement needs for Syrian Refugees. The outlook for the remainder of 2021 and 2022 is improved; linked to a stronger re-engagement of USA resettlement processing.

As the needs of Syrians far outstrip the available resettlement places which would likely be made available, a broader call for third country solutions including through complementary pathways is needed. In line with second aim of the Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways, the MENA Contact Group for Complementary Pathways (MCGCP) was formed in November 2020, which is the key vehicle for driving complementary pathways in the region in 2021 and beyond. The MCGCP is a multilateral platform with over 117 participants that disseminates information on opportunities, advocates for complementary pathways programmes, and shares best practices among partners, including 3RP, resettlement states and private sector actors.

Access to Local Opportunities and Solutions

As many Syrian refugees are likely to remain in host countries into the medium term, expanding local opportunities and solutions remains a key need across the refugee population. While the scale and scope of such opportunities are different in each of the 3RP countries, refugee's needs include a supportive legal and administrative framework that protects rights and provides a range of socio-economic opportunities to build self-reliance in the short term, while enhancing the prospect of achieving a successful durable solution in the future. Such opportunities can help people re-gain full agency of their legal, material, and physical well-being and safety.

It also reduces the risk of displaced persons irregularly relocating to third countries, which are often associated with perilous journeys under exploitive conditions. In the past year, there have been increased reports of Syrian refugees moving onwards from the region, Such movements have exposed Syrians to numerous dangers including drowning, assault and detention. This year, for example, Syrians have been among the primary nationalities ending up in detention in Libya and also arriving in Italy after crossing from Libya.



Photos by UNHCR / Diego Ibarra Sánchez

Thirteen-year-old Syrian refugee Bakr works in a supermarket and delivers food to support his family in Barja, Lebanon.

Struggling to find a job after an injury sustained during the siege and living under the deteriorating economic situation in Lebanon, Mohammad and his wife, Wafaa, are forced to rely on the income of their son, Bakr, who is only 13 years old. He dropped out of school and started working two years ago, putting on hold his dreams of studying architecture, to support his family. However, his earnings barely cover monthly rent and the family is in dire need. "When I see my son working and not studying, I feel so sad", said Wafaa worrying about his son's psychological state.

Resettlement is a life-saving and important protection tool for many refugees like Bakr and his family whose fundamental rights are at risk in the country of asylum.

Note: The story is from 2020 and the family were waiting to be resettled which had been postponed due to the pandemic.



Survey - March 2021 Sixth Regional Survey on Syrian Refugee's Perceptions and Intentions on Return to Syria

Question:

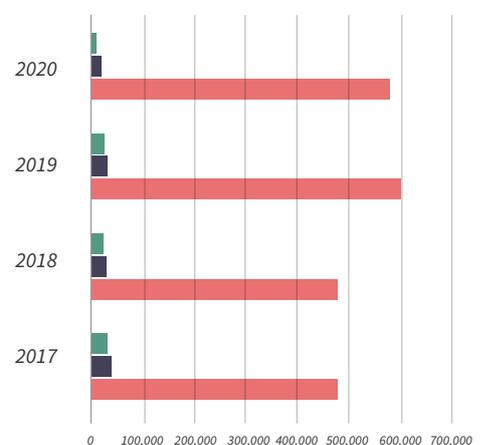
"Do you hope to go back to Syria one day?"



Data as of March 2021

Projected Resettlement Needs, Submissions and Departures for Syrian refugees in MENA and Turkey

- = SYR needs
- = SYR submissions
- = SYR departures



Additional data

Supporting Dignified Lives

The crisis continues to impact protection and socio-economic well-being of vulnerable populations. 3RP partners estimate that some 20 million people require some form of assistance in terms of supporting their efforts to live a dignified life. Such needs are wide-ranging and multi-sectoral in nature, and addressing them is a priority for 3RP partners.

Ensuring Food Security

Food Security Sector partners have worked to reach the most vulnerable across the region with life-saving food assistance, while increasingly focusing on the promotion of dietary diversity, sustainable agriculture and rural livelihoods. In 2020 and 2021, challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated vulnerability to food insecurity significantly across each of its food dimensions (food availability, access, affordability, utilization, and stability). Assessments indicate higher needs among both refugees and vulnerable host communities, while groups who have so far withstood the effects of the Syria crisis are now considered extremely vulnerable to food insecurity. This is also contributing to public tensions and social insecurities.

In Jordan,

only 2 per cent of refugee households can meet their essential food needs, 79 per cent designated food as their top need, mostly because of a lack of money.

Findings from an UNRWA multi-sectoral Rapid Survey on the impact of COVID-19, conducted in 2020, showed that 62 per cent of surveyed PRS families were concerned about not having enough food to eat, while 90 percent did not have enough cash to sustain their family for two weeks. Almost half of the respondents (49.6 per cent) had their work disrupted by COVID-19.

Livelihoods Opportunities for Refugees and Host communities

Income losses coupled with the absence or limited capacity of social safety nets in most 3RP countries have led to an increased use of harmful coping strategies by vulnerable individuals. This occurs especially as most of the refugees have limited or not eligible for government assistance due to national policy limitations. The concentration in the informal sector allows refugees to earn some income as part of their coping strategies. Many households have used up their already limited savings to face the crisis, leading to increased indebtedness and exposure to high-interest loan rates. In addition to debts, households also report cutting down the number of meals and other “non-priority” household expenses. Female-headed households are often most at risk in this regard. The livelihoods of women are also in jeopardy.

The loss of jobs and income among both refugees and host communities has also exacerbated competition over scarcer employment opportunities, particularly for low-skilled workers, and public services. This has contributed to rising social tensions in some countries, both between refugees and host communities and between host community members themselves.

Moreover, COVID-19 has highlighted that refugees and other informal workers are unable to benefit from public employment support and social assistance schemes in case of severe economic downturn.



[Click to watch video](#)

Nissrine is a Syrian refugee living in Bekaa Valley, Lebanon.

While considering herself to be a strong woman, Nissrine is finding it difficult to cope with daily hardships - paying for basic needs and food, securing accommodation, and seeking livelihoods.

*Video by WeWorld Global;
Part of the “Stuck in Time” series*



In Jordan, refugee livelihoods have been severely impacted since 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic implications, with over 42 per cent of refugees being unable to meet less than half of their basic needs and 86 per cent having resorted to harmful coping strategies, such as reducing food portions, taking kids out of school, and more.²¹

Unemployment is on the rise, reaching 25 per cent in Q1-2021, with youth unemployment rates reaching an unprecedented 48.1 per cent and women's labor force participation at 14 per cent.²²

Main impacts from COVID-19 on Jordanian households are:

1) 73% of Jordanian households had difficulties covering basic needs (rent, food, heating and medicine)



2) Access to clean drinking water (38%).



In addition, 69% of household reported challenges in accessing basic healthcare.



In Lebanon, in terms of livelihood-based coping mechanisms, from 2020-2021:

More households are taking on debt to purchase food



More households reduced their health expenditure



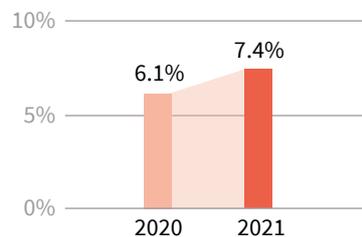
More households reduced their education expenditure



73% of Palestine refugee families in Lebanon are now living below the poverty line, with 58 per cent of refugees reporting having to reduce meal sizes and frequency.²³



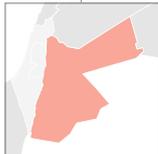
7.4% of households withdrew children from school as a coping mechanism.



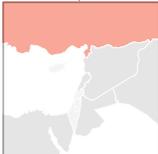
There has been an improvement in labor market indicators such as labor force participation and employment for Syrians. This remains unevenly spread however, with women continuing to have less favorable indicators than men, and the South seeing larger improvements than elsewhere.

Nationally in 2021, the labour force participation rate is 47 per cent (vs 43 per cent in 2020), but this is 16 per cent for women and 81 per cent for men.

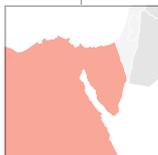




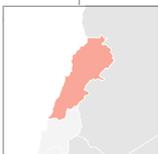
In Zaatari camp in Jordan, in particular, almost 20 per cent of children aged 5-17 feel intense anxiety on a daily basis.²⁴ The unmet demand for assistive technology also exists for refugees with disabilities.



In Turkey, mental health problems are also a major concern, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, a survey²⁵ of Syrian refugees in Turkey has found that PTSD is a significant mental health problem in temporary accommodation centres, with a higher prevalence among women exposed to two or more traumatic events and with a history of psychiatric disorder.



In Egypt, refugees with disabilities face the common barriers of language, poor referrals, costly secondary and tertiary healthcare, in addition to disability specific challenges²⁶.



In Lebanon, the multiple crises have pushed people into poverty and difficult living situations have led to increasing mental issues. Depression, suicide attempts and self-harm are increasing. During June-July 2021, according to the VASyR survey²⁷, 10.2 per cent of Syrian refugees ages 5 and older reported feeling worried, nervous, anxious or depressed (a lot and on a daily basis). The highest rates are among those ages 5-14 and 60 and older. The rates between men and women are similar.

In Lebanon, households also faced a range of barriers in accessing treatments. The primary barrier reported as inability to pay either for the treatment, drugs or doctors' fees. Other barriers included transportation issue and shortages of medicine - including to treat emergencies, infections, and acute and chronic diseases such as antibiotics, antiaggregant, antidiabetic drugs and to treat children such as antipyretics, antibiotics, and vaccines. In 2021, almost two-thirds of households that required drugs reported not finding all the drugs they needed. Furthermore, with the high rates of inflation, the basic salary of a nurse became equivalent to 83\$ and 500\$ for a doctor. This has led to a mass migration of doctors and nurses seeking a better future. 59 per cent of HHs had a member that required medications in the last 3 months.

In Lebanon, 67 per cent of the household having at least one member with disability required primary healthcare assistance and 15 per cent of these households did not receive PHC assistance²⁸.

Only 38 per cent of persons with disabilities reported to have proper treatment for their impairment.²⁹



Abir has been living in Lebanon for eight years, leaving behind her mother in Syria. She has been hoping that the war will be over and she will be able to go back to Syria, to build a house and live a peaceful and dignified life.

**Abir, Syrian refugee
living in Akkar, Lebanon**

With no other choice, Abir works in a strawberry farm a few days a week to pay the rent and water, and buy food and other necessities.

“When I found out that I was pregnant, I was over the moon. Unfortunately, I don’t have access to health services. Perhaps one day, when we have enough money, we’ll go back to the doctor and continue the therapy. I liked going to school in Syria, because I love to learn and I want a better life, but now I am a married woman and soon I will have a baby. Going back to school is a dream that I have given up on completely.”

 [Read More](#)



[Click to watch video](#)

Access to Quality Health Services

Access to health services for vulnerable individuals is limited not only by capacity in the health system, but also by their own financial capacity. While Syrian refugees in the sub-region do have access to government subsidized primary health care services often at similar rates to that of vulnerable host communities. However, out-of-pocket costs in several of the 3RP countries remain a barrier to these services for both Syrian refugees and vulnerable host community members. This has been exacerbated by the loss of jobs and/or income through COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these needs by disrupting the supply of many health and nutrition services as well as diagnostics and medicines for chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, mental illnesses, and cancer, and by generating additional demand for COVID-19 specific health services, including reproductive health services and the clinical management of rape. Furthermore, issues surrounding COVID-19 have also disrupted health service provision, with lack of transport being a barrier cited in numerous assessments in 3RP countries and the social stigma associated with COVID-19 encouraging illness concealment and increased distrust in health authorities lowering the likelihood of compliance.

Displaced women and children and vulnerable community members, particularly those directly exposed to conflict or violence require sustained and accessible Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS). Mental distress such as anxiety, depression or chronic stress have been widely triggered or compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic due to challenges such as lack of resources, fear of evictions, risks of exploitation, violence and discrimination, disruption of social networks, isolation as well as lack of livelihood opportunities.

*Video by WeWorld Global;
Part of the “Stuck in Time” series
Photos by Francesca Volpi*

Enhancing Local & National Capacities

3RP partners are working closely with national and local partners in responding to the needs of refugees and host community members. This includes not only providing direct support to public institutions and local entities to help them strengthen basic service delivery, but also encouraging civil society and the private sector, as per the localization principles, to take part in the response.

Improvements in capacities of public institutions

The influx and the protracted presence of refugees in 3RP countries has had a significant impact on available resources, public services and infrastructure (e.g. housing, education, health, sanitation and waste management, water, etc.). Host governments have been providing public services for refugees in the various environments that they live in but are limited by the capacity of existing infrastructure and service delivery systems coupled with mounting social and economic challenges. Competition over limited resources delivered via stressed infrastructure and systems threatens social cohesion among refugees and host communities.

Needs in this area vary across the sub-region. In Turkey, the Union of Municipalities of Turkey estimated in 2019 that to fully expand provision of basic services such as water, waste management, transportation, and social services, a total of nearly USD 500m per year would be needed. In Jordan, the impact of increased water demand includes the use of more expensive desalination, additional wear and tear on assets, and significant increases in non-revenue water loss (due to increased pressure and periods of supply). In Lebanon, the most recent social stability monitoring surveys highlighted decreasing feedback on educational services, with the number of respondents rating educational services as 'good' or better has fallen by 18.2 per centage points over three years.³⁰ Though the experience of COVID-19 has most likely exacerbated worsening

perceptions of education services, the downward trend in levels of satisfaction pre-dates the pandemic.³¹ For instance, the shift to distance learning modalities brought about many challenges, impacting learners, caregivers and teachers. Distance learning was not widely practiced in Lebanon prior to the pandemic and the sudden transition was difficult for many especially as the country grappled with the economic crisis.

Continuity of Public Services for Host Community and Refugee Populations

Equitable service provision for Syrian refugees and vulnerable host community members is among the challenges significantly impacted by COVID-19. Critically, physical and social distancing requirements have prevented public institutions at national and subnational levels from working as usual, calling for new processes and technologies, including sound data and information management systems to secure business continuity in the delivery of services and meet the growing needs of vulnerable populations with the appropriate level of speed, responsiveness and accountability. This will be particularly key to preserving social cohesion and maintaining and

rebuilding trust in the public sector as it is noted that competition for services, like water or electricity, can be a source of tension among refugees and their host communities.³²

For example, *in Lebanon,*
34.7% of Lebanese and



11.6% of Syrians cited competition over services as a tension factor.



Particular areas of need to ensure continuity and, in some cases, expansion of services are support for online working modalities (particularly in areas like education, health, legal services) for national and local institutions. Efforts have been made to strengthen the outreach of existing social assistance systems, including through leveraging digital technologies for the identification of beneficiaries and provision of payments. These transformative changes will need to be nurtured and sustained in future 3RP programmatic efforts in synergy with other broader response frameworks that seek to improve national and local governance systems, including through strengthened data, information management and communication systems for improved crisis management and service delivery.

Support to Employers and Businesses

As noted earlier, with livelihoods and economic opportunities representing key needs of refugees and vulnerable host community members, there is a strong need to support small businesses, cooperatives and other private sector entities that are involved in economic activity, job creation, and skills training for women, men and youth. Such support is needed to help them expand their activities and also business development services to identify new clients or market linkages. In doing so, this can support employment and business opportunities for refugees and vulnerable host community members. The recovery of businesses after COVID-19 will require reinvigorated support from 3RP and other actors including governments, Multilateral

Development Banks, International Financial Institutions, philanthropists and so forth.

In Turkey, many refugee businesses have witnessed a severe impact on revenues, which also led to a decrease by about 12 per cent of the workforce employed by Syrian businesses. As for Turkish businesses, the impact seems to have been similarly hard, with 70 per cent reporting a decrease in volume and 57 per cent a decrease in workforce (particularly for female employees), citing lack of demand (domestic and foreign) and of investment as key risks at the moment.

In Jordan, similar assessments also highlighted concerning trends: The COVID-19 pandemic has had negative impacts on enterprises of all sizes, and across all sectors. However, it has been particularly harmful to micro and small businesses. Four out of ten

interviewed enterprises confirmed that they had laid off one or more employees. The greatest economic burden on enterprises during the pandemic was rent (61 per cent), wages and social security payments (51 per cent) and payment of invoices (30 per cent). Yet, four in ten enterprises (41 per cent) trust their economic resilience and feel confident that they will come through the pandemic as profitable and resilient businesses. The need to support the digitalization of businesses and investment in e-commerce, digital platforms and other online livelihoods activities has also increasingly come to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic. With regard to skills training and the education-to-work transition, there is also a need to develop better linkages with civil society organizations who play an important role in this across 3RP countries.

Many refugee businesses have witnessed a severe impact on revenues³³, which also led to a decrease by about 12 per cent of the workforce employed by Syrian businesses. As for Turkish businesses, the impact seems to have been similarly hard, with 70% reporting a decrease in volume and 57% a decrease in workforce (particularly for women employees), citing lack of demand (domestic and foreign) and of investment as key risks at the moment.

Residents of Tripoli, one of Lebanon's poorest and most marginalized cities, are suffering from the repercussions of the worst national socioeconomic and financial crisis to date, aggravated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With only 16% of women employed and more than 50% of youth facing difficulty entering the labor market, escaping the cycle of hardship is extremely challenging amid nation-wide inflation.

Photo by UNDP Lebanon / Rana Sweidan



Country Contexts

While there are many similarities across the region in terms of the scale and scope of needs and vulnerabilities, there are also differences as a result of the unique country contexts. Each country undertakes a wide range of assessments throughout the year, including sectoral, inter-sectoral, thematic, and agency specific assessments to identify the needs, including since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This section provides a snapshot of the key needs and vulnerabilities in each of the countries.

3RP Country Chapter



Document

TURKEY

The majority of respondents to the IA Protection Needs Assessment, indicated to be **working informally** prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The working status of many (69%) has changed negatively, with the main reasons for changes in working status and conditions remain related to COVID-19.³⁴

According to UN Women report on needs assessment of Syrian women and girls in Turkey, 17% of Syrian women, who are not active in the formal or informal labour market, are looking for a job. This means that most of women (83%) are not looking for a job. Research shows that **childcare responsibilities** (38%), not getting permission to work from either their husband or family (20%), care of disabled and elderly in the household (11%), and housework (9%) are the major reasons for not seeking for employment.³⁵ For women and girls, language seems to be a significant barrier, whereby 70% of the female Syrian population in Turkey says they have little to no knowledge of the Turkish language.³⁶

Out of the 91% of refugees who attempted to **access services** 31% were unable to do so. Mobile populations (44% unable to access) and female headed households (36%) were identified to be facing slightly more challenges in access to services compared to other groups. Majority of barriers in accessing services relate to **COVID-19 impact on reduced operational capacity and shift in service provision modalities** (i.e., difficulties in accessing services through remote modalities)³⁷.

LEBANON

The unprecedented multi-layered political, economic and public health crises currently facing Lebanon are contributing to vulnerable refugees and host communities falling deeper into **poverty** across Lebanon due to currency depreciation, high inflation, rising food prices and loss of income. Nine out of ten **Syrian refugees** continue to live below the extreme poverty line, following a steep decline since 2019 (VASYR).³⁸

Vulnerable **Lebanese** families are also struggling to cope. 46% of households contacted through WFP/World Bank phone surveys in June-July 2021 reported **challenges in accessing food and other basic needs**, up from 40% year on year. The share of households having difficulties in accessing **healthcare** has increased sharply from 25% to 48% a year later.

Both **inter-communal and intra-communal tensions** are growing. In August 2021, through the regular UNDP-ARK perception surveys, 36% of respondents reported negative relations between refugee and host communities, compared to 21% in July 2018. Relationships are becoming increasingly strained, with pressure points ranging from access to services and job competition, to historical grievances between the communities. High levels of **insecurity and violence** are being reported, with 8700 incidents reported since January 2021, including related to roadblocks, thefts and demonstrations.

Response Plan



Document

3RP Country Chapter



Document

EGYPT

Refugees with disabilities face the common barriers of language, poor referrals, costly secondary and tertiary healthcare, in addition to disability specific challenges.

39.6% (rate higher in urban areas where most refugees live) of refugees are considered **poor** and **poverty is less prevalent among Syrian refugees**.

Response Plan



Document

JORDAN

Unemployment is on the rise, reaching 25% in Q1-2021, with youth unemployment rates reaching an unprecedented 48.1% and women's labour force participation at 14%.³⁹

20% of the Syrian refugees faced **acute food insecurity** in 2020 (GRFC, 2021) and more than half of households, whether in camps or local communities limited adults' food intake for children to eat.⁴⁰

3RP Country Chapter



Document

IRAQ

The negative socio-economic impact of COVID-19 continues to be felt in Iraq with 93% of the refugee households report receiving **less income than pre-COVID-19** and 88% of the refugee households reported **fewer daily labour opportunities** than pre-COVID-19. In total 83% of the refugee population reported increased stress levels, mainly due to the decrease in sources of income.

Refugees in Iraq do rarely encounter social cohesion and legal challenges. Less than 1% of refugee households feel unwelcomed by host communities, report having been involved in legal or civil disputes within three months of being asked and being affected by a safety or security incident within three months of being asked. However, on average, more than 50% of the households reported that at least one member **missing relevant legal documents** such as passport and national ID cards.

Turkey

TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS, AND STATELESS PERSONS IN NEED

4,131,541

TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIANS IN NEED

3,798,361

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOST COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN NEED

8,500,000



Levels of **access to information** on rights and services remain high within refugee communities, with

74% indicating to have enough information on rights and services. While financial/material assistance, resettlement and information related to working in Turkey remained amongst the top ranked information needs by communities, registration, and documentation as well as legal assistance were identified as new information needs. Primary sources of information remain within communities themselves ⁴¹.



Amongst children enrolled in school, only 33% report to always have **access to online education systems**

with main difficulties faced related to absence of (or inadequate) equipment and infrastructure. The top reasons for being out of school for school-aged children include problems faced during registration and financial barriers which was noted particularly by female headed households ⁴².



75% of households surveyed as part of the Intersectoral Vulnerability Study, report having **debt**. A

large portion of refugee households **cannot afford or can barely afford basic household items, communication costs, kitchenware, drinking water and education costs**. Food, shelter and electricity are of particular concern as more than 65% report not being able or barely able to meet those essential needs. This impacts stress levels for household members with 38% of households indicating being seriously worried about their ability to meet basic needs in the next three months. ⁴³

Over the last seven years, Turkey has been hosting the largest number of refugees and asylum seekers globally.

Of these, 3.7 million are Syrians under temporary protection and 320,000 are international protection applicants and status holders from other countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran, most of whom live among the host communities. The government continues to lead the refugee response under Turkey's comprehensive legal and policy framework, providing a model of refugee inclusion in line with the Global Compact on Refugees. 3RP partners provide important support to public institutions to enable them to protect and assist vulnerable refugees and host community members, while providing complementary assistance where needed.

The COVID-19 pandemic placed an additional strain on many groups, including refugees, exacerbating and increasing vulnerabilities and requiring humanitarian and development partners to adapt service delivery modalities. Despite the government's robust response to the pandemic, the sudden and unexpected loss of refugee livelihoods and income in Turkey as a result of COVID-19 has been devastating. Since the onset of the pandemic, needs assessments have shown that more than 70 per cent of refugee households have faced negative changes in employment and income status, which has resulted in increased basic needs across the board. Combined with increasing inflation, this has meant that the minimum expenditure basket ⁴⁴, which represents the minimum cost required to have a decent standard of living, has been on a constant rise since the end of 2018, reaching 626 TRY per person per month in June 2021 (a 26.4 per cent increase as compared to March 2020). As a

result, refugee households have accumulated debts to cover their essential needs.

The median level of debts has increased by at least two-thirds since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic with 75% reported having debts.



66% of households have a debt greater than one month of their income and 43 per cent greater than two months of income. ⁴⁵



Increased stress both at individual and community levels (reported around 57%), increased conflict within households (36 per cent) and increased domestic violence (29 per cent) in their communities



According to the most recent Inter-Agency Protection Needs Assessment (IAPNA) conducted in June 2021, 69 per cent of respondents reported struggling to meet food costs, 65 per cent with rent/housing expenses, and 39 per cent with utilities, amongst other daily expenses. To manage these difficulties 98 per cent reported having to resort to some form of harmful coping mechanism, including through the reduction of essential food

expenditure and borrowing money from friends and family.

Refugee vulnerabilities are compounded by gender inequalities. Research shows that regular livelihoods projects in the south-eastern region are not equally accessible to women because of gender-specific social barriers with respect to employment. Adult women are far less likely than men to speak Turkish (64 per cent of women vs. 33 per cent of men aged 18-59 years do not speak Turkish at all) or to have received any formal education which increases barriers to livelihoods for women.

Since 2016, the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) has offered a lifeline to hundreds of thousands of refugees. However, the number of vulnerable households has grown far beyond what was anticipated at the beginning of 2020, requiring emergency and one-off cash support to help reduce the impact of the pandemic. As of September 2021, 1,499,124 individuals (241,268 households) living under temporary and international protection received ESSN allocation, and 344,601 individuals (85,365 households) living under temporary and international protection received complementary ESSN assistance which provides higher transfer amounts for the most vulnerable amongst the monthly multi-purpose cash programme beneficiaries.

Businesses and their owners have also faced challenges. A survey conducted in January 2021 showed that 68 per cent of small and medium enterprises had been forced to contract as a result of lockdowns. Whilst lockdown measures had mostly been lifted by summer 2021, many of the enterprises surveyed believed that the crisis would continue to impact their businesses in 2022 and most (particularly Syrian-owned enterprises) were not prepared for a second wave of restrictions. Robust support needs to be provided to them (e.g., grants, access to digitalization, support for staff retention, information on legal and business development support schemes, a business platform for opportunities with Turkish enterprises, and financing inclusion) in 2022 and beyond.

In regard to protection risks and needs, findings of the IAPNA show that negative changes in working status have increased (or heightened risk of exposure to) various protection concerns as seen below.



Domestic violence emerges as a “shadow pandemic” and profoundly affects Syrian women and girls. Women appear poorly informed about their rights

and available legal support services. Although Syrian **women and girls risk ill-treatment and discrimination** in their daily lives, research shows that 73% do not know where to find assistance related to violence or harassment. 74% do not know where to seek support for their children.



Over the past year, health services and service providers remained amongst the hardest to reach by refugee communities. The main barriers in **access to health**

services is mostly related to legal status and status of insurances for individuals of other nationalities whereas for Syrian nationals the main barriers were related to COVID-19 circumstances. The assessment indicates that, the majority of refugees (64%) despite being eligible for vaccination had not yet been vaccinated. The main reason for not accessing the vaccination is not taking any action to receive the vaccine (59%)⁴⁶.

The reduction in service capacity and outreach has made it harder to identify and protect vulnerable individuals, especially women and children, despite efforts to increase support through helplines, psychosocial counselling, and remote/blended service delivery modalities. There is a need to focus on investment in robust referral mechanisms and in services to respond to the specific needs of women and children-at-risk. Hybrid or blended service delivery needs to be supported as while most vulnerable individuals need increased access to tools through increased digital literacy and infrastructure, assessments indicate that 45 per cent of refugee households do not have access to digital tools and another 57 per cent indicate difficulties in navigating remote systems. Consequently, a mix of remote and in-person service delivery is needed to balance support for the most vulnerable with efficient delivery.

As of the start of the 2021/22 school year, 771,458 Syrian children under temporary protection were enrolled in Turkish public schools. However, more than 400,000 school-aged children were still out-of-school and did not have any access to education opportunities. Out-of-school children are one of the most vulnerable groups in Turkey, and face multiple child protection risks, including psychosocial distress, child labour, child marriage and other forms of neglect, exploitation and abuse. Although University enrolments of Syrians under temporary protection has increased to 47,482 in the 2020-2021 academic year, the Government of Turkey’s recent decision to cancel the fee waiver policy for Syrians’ students is likely to impact rates of enrolment.

The negative impact of COVID-19 on face-to-face teaching, interaction with peers and domestic violence have resulted in a loss of learning for vulnerable children, including host community members and refugees, which harms learning gains made in the past few years. Further negative effects on school enrolment, attendance, and retention at all levels have also occurred, resulting in the adoption of harmful coping mechanisms among children such as child labour, mainly for boys, and the exposure of girls to child marriages and other forms of exploitation. Continued investment is needed for sustained support to systems and accredited programmes that provide a wider range of relevant pathways to learning to enhance access to formal education, vocational training, and life skills development, as well as accelerated learning programmes for those who have missed several years of schooling.

From assessments, there are also signs that the social distance between refugees and host communities continues to grow. The pandemic has affected entire communities, resulting in both increased poverty and heightened anxiety. The added stress placed on individuals, families and communities is undoing the positive trends toward social cohesion made thus far, while increasing competition for limited resources, livelihoods and assistance risks placing further strains on community relations. Sustained and structured social cohesion programming needs to continue, particularly involving refugee and host community youth, and be mainstreamed in programmes and activities to counter any further deterioration in community relations.

Lebanon

TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES,
ASYLUM SEEKERS, AND STATELESS
PERSONS IN NEED

1,707,700

TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIANS
IN NEED

1,500,000

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOST
COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN NEED

1,500,000



Elevated **food insecurity** among refugees has not eased, with nearly half (49%) of Syrian refugee households deemed

to be moderately or severely food insecure, which represented 1.7 times the level of 2019 (29%).



79% of **Palestine refugee** households (PRL & PRS) are poor or extremely poor and half had incurred new debt in

the last three months, according to an UNRWA socio economic assessment in July 2021.



Today in Lebanon an estimation of 90 per cent of Syrian refugee households with persons with disabilities

live in extreme **poverty**, and these households are living on **less than half the Lebanese minimum wage**. Among individuals with a disability, 18 per cent did not have legal residency permits and cannot access services, adopting damaging coping mechanism as reducing the number and portions of food per day.

Lebanon continues to host the highest number of Syrian refugees per capita in the world with October 2021 estimates of 1.5 million Syrians living in Lebanon, including 851,717 registered as refugees with UNHCR and 257,000 Palestine refugees including PRS.

Syrian refugees continue to face significant protection threats, with just 16 per cent of individuals reporting holding valid legal residency in 2021, down from 20 per cent in 2020.

The unprecedented multi-layered political, economic and public health crises is undermining the subsistence capacity of already vulnerable populations across the country, in particular for women, girls and boys. Individuals and families are falling deeper into poverty due to currency depreciation, high inflation, rising food prices and loss of income. The COVID-19 outbreak has exacerbated the situation by reducing vulnerable populations' access to food, livelihood opportunities and other basic services. More recently, gaps in supply chains (including fuel and electricity) are impacting the operational environment, including access to services for beneficiaries, while partners are facing increased pressure from local authorities and communities amid reduced state service provision and spiralling needs.

Access to basic services including health, education and electricity – which are severely strained – remain key priorities for the population despite the current challenges. Gaps in municipal capacity further affects basic service provision and emergency preparedness, contributing to additional pressure on response actors. As of August 2021, only 3.6 per cent rated the quality of electricity in their area as 'good' or better. People report that on average, they had 18.9 hours of service interruption each day.

In terms of access to healthcare, many people are now unable to afford treatment, care and transportation to primary health care facilities and hospitals. People are deprioritizing non-urgent health care including preventive primary healthcare. From the supply side, health care facilities are struggling as well to maintain their medical supply stocks with severe shortages in some medicines and to prevent the high staff turnover that is affected by many of the healthcare workforce leaving the country due to the deteriorating socio-economic situation. Mental health issues such as depression and self-harm are reportedly increasing across populations.

The compounded situation is also affecting water service delivery across communities. At institutional level, due to the devaluation of the Lebanese Pound, the Water Establishments are facing difficulties in accessing spare parts and fuel for the pumping stations. At the same time, Water Establishments are receiving limited revenues from subscription fees, due to public distrust and inability to pay. Civil unrest and lockdowns have delayed the implementation of WASH infrastructural and community mobilization activities within the response.

Since October 2019, almost all schools have been closed for a substantive period, affecting over 1.3 million children and keeping over 700,000 children entirely out of school⁴⁷. With reference to refugee children, the education system is marked by severe inequities driving low attendance and school dropouts. These barriers to learning for refugee children include lack of available spaces, legal obstacles to

enrolment, discrimination, long distances/lack of transportation to school and language⁴⁸. This is evidenced by the fact that only 30 per cent of school aged Syrian refugee children have never been to school⁴⁹. Additional difficulties are being faced in the delivery of remote learning due to the challenge of accessing to devices, internet and electricity for most students. This has caused a severe inequity in access, which is highlighted largely in the second shift schools where WhatsApp has been used as the main platform for e-learning. Since the pandemic, more than 1.2 million children in Lebanon have been out of school. Over the past COVID-19 year, Lebanese children have received an estimated maximum of 11 weeks of education, with an even lower number of weeks in schools for Syrian children.

In 2021, the food security situation remains at the same concerning level as in 2020. In 2021, half (49 per cent) of the Syrian refugee households are food insecure, more than 1.7 times the level of 2019 (29 per cent). Spiralling prices and deterioration in the exchange rate without household income increasing at the same pace continues to negatively affect households' ability to meet their food needs: 90 per cent of Syrian refugee households reported having difficulties in buying food due to lack of money in Q2 2021, compared to 80 per cent in Q1 2021.

While an increased number of Syrian refugee households (66 per cent) reported having at least one member of the family working in 2021, household income remains extremely low,

equivalent to one fifth of the survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB), raising concerns regarding the likelihood of undignified work. A high level of aid dependency persists.

Over the last three years, refugee-host community relations in Lebanon have been on a negative trajectory. In August 2021, through the regular UNDP-ARK perception surveys, 36 per cent of respondents reported negative inter-communal relations. This is evidence that relationships are becoming increasingly strained, with pressure points ranging from access to services and job competition, to historical grievances between the communities. Intra-Lebanese relations have witnessed a deterioration, with a sharp increase in tensions during 2021 primarily driven by political and sectarian divides, followed by economic factors. In 2018, 4% of Lebanese cited negative relations between different communities, whilst in August 2021, 31% of respondents reported negative relations.⁵⁰

The main immediate causes to inter-communal tensions are access to cash (75 per cent) and competition for lower skilled jobs (53 per cent) in a context where aid perception bias is high.

Lebanon is also experiencing increasing insecurity with a context that is dominated by growing crime, theft, community-level tensions, and violence often related to accessing subsidized products and fuel. The deteriorating security situation continues to negatively impact intra- and inter-communal tensions.

As of June 2021, 28,017 PRS were registered with UNRWA in Lebanon. Multiple overlapping crises, including a rapidly deteriorating socio-economic situation with widespread fuel and electricity shortages and soaring food prices, exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19 and the repercussions of the 2020 Beirut Port explosion, have caused mounting vulnerability for all Palestine refugees in Lebanon, including PRS. According to UNRWA's Crisis Monitoring Report for Lebanon (July 2021), 73 per cent of the 475 Palestine refugee households interviewed described themselves as poor or extremely poor. Data from the Agency's internal monitoring mechanisms indicated that an increasing number of Palestine refugees were unable to cover their basic needs in 2021. Basic and essential commodities are becoming increasingly out of reach for most, food security is deteriorating, and Palestine refugees are being pushed into increasingly harmful coping mechanisms to survive.

The situation of PRS remains of particular concern. A socio-economic survey conducted by UNRWA in 2020 found that 87.3 per cent of PRS in Lebanon live below the absolute poverty line and 11.3 per cent exist in a state of abject poverty.



Syrian refugees holding valid **legal residency** in Lebanon has further decreased from 20% of individuals over

15 years old in 2020 to just 16% in 2021, hampering their access to basic services, civil documentation and increasing the risk of deportation.⁵¹ (VASyR 2020).



Women and girls continue to be disproportionately affected by **GBV** in Lebanon (97% of the

survivors reporting an incident to GBV-Information Management System are female). The most common type of incident reported to LCRP partners is domestic violence/intimate partners violence (55% of the cases). Family tensions exacerbated by the dire economic situation and the reduction of purchase power are among the determinants of this high percentage of domestic violence cases.



Child labour is on the rise, with an increase from 4% to 5.3% of Syrian families reporting working children

through the VASyR, while partners around the country continue to report that this is a growing problem.

Jordan

TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS, AND STATELESS PERSONS IN NEED

758,158

TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIANS IN NEED

670,748

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOST COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN NEED

520,000



In Jordan, the 2019 Vulnerability Assessment Framework found that 21% of Syrian refugees surveyed had at least

one person with **disability** and 45% of Syrian households surveyed had one or more members with at least one disability.⁵²



In Zaatari camp in Jordan, in particular, almost 20 per cent of children aged 5-17 feel intense anxiety on a

daily basis. The unmet demand for assistive technology also exists for refugees with disabilities.



The percentage of people aged 60 years and over in the Arab Region is the percentage of people aged 60

years and over in the Arab Region is estimated at about 7%, it is likely to rise to 18% by 2050. Older Persons should be protected from all forms of violence, abuse and discrimination.

Jordan hosts 759,351 refugees (670,023 Syrians) with the majority living in host communities (17.2 per cent live in camps). In addition, 18,164 PRS were registered with UNRWA in Jordan as of the end of June 2021.

In March 2021, WFP VAM assessments indicated that 88 per cent of refugee households in host community were either food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity. At the same time, adoption of consumption coping strategies reached alarming levels among refugee households, mainly through reliance on low quality less preferred foods and reductions in the number of meals consumed per day. Alongside consumption-based coping strategies, the adoption of harmful livelihoods-based coping strategies – and potentially irreversible ones – also increased substantially following the emergence of COVID-19 in Jordan.

A UNDP rapid assessment on COVID-19 Impact⁵³ pertaining to approximately 12,000 host community members in March 2020 showed that three-quarters of respondents (72.5 per cent) had difficulties covering basic needs (rent, food, heating and medicine) due to the lockdown measures in place at the time of the survey. Access to clean drinking water was a concern for 38.3 per cent of respondents. Even more concerning was access to basic healthcare, with 69.3 per cent reporting challenges. COVID-19 also exacerbated host community financial situation with 66 per cent of respondents indicating that their financial resources were depleting rapidly with no opportunities for income generation and a dire outlook if the situation was to continue. Almost two-thirds of respondents (63.3 per cent) mentioned that they did not know where to turn for support and only 3.4 per cent accessed government support.

In June 2021, WFP indicated that a slightly lower but still very high rate of 84 per cent of refugee households in the communities were either food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity, including 23 per cent currently food insecure (compared to 21 per cent in 2021). However, for specific vulnerable population the numbers are higher, with 88 per cent of female-headed households, 85 per cent of households with disabled or chronically ill members, and 87 per cent of large households (>6 members) deemed food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity.

Nearly 30 per cent of Syrian refugee households in Jordan are female-headed, and on average they have higher vulnerability ratings than male-headed households. Approximately 48 per cent of female-headed households are reliant on aid to meet their food security needs. Furthermore, while approximately 135,000 work permits had been issued to Syrian refugees under the Jordan Compact by the end of 2019, only 5 per cent went to women. Due to challenges related to legal status, social stigma, transportation and childcare arrangements, combined with a perception that having a work permit will result in reduced social benefits, vulnerable Syrian refugee women are not applying for work permits.

Regarding housing, refugees in the camp setting often occupy shelters beyond recommended lifespans, increasing the risks associated with inadequate or substandard housing. Given COVID-19 self-isolation and quarantine measures alongside the higher risk of transmission associated with inadequate or

overcrowded living conditions, the need for safe and adequate housing is essential. Upgrades to existing substandard housing and the creation of new housing units are important needs.

On WASH, large-scale support is also needed for the maintenance, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of water and sanitation infrastructure, both in vulnerable communities and at schools. Advocacy for the implementation of minimum WASH standards across all schools in Jordan and support for communities with little or no access to clean drinking water is also critical. Currently, humanitarian programmes are facilitating water and wastewater services for over 113,000 Syrian refugees in camp settings. COVID-19 has also heightened the protection risks faced by refugees and vulnerable Jordanians, especially women and girls. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic much of the protection response switched to remote service delivery which allowed service providers to continuously deliver life-saving services for beneficiaries. However, continued support for remote service delivery and coordination with key government partners is needed to meet growing protection-related concerns.

Given the increase in vulnerabilities that have occurred due to COVID-19, including swelling debts, overdue rent, lack of available job opportunities and higher living costs, the need for a strengthened and coordinated protection response is critical in the upcoming year.

Livelihoods and access to income for refugees and vulnerable host community members have also been significantly impacted by COVID-19 and measures taken to mitigate its spread. According to the UNDP rapid assessment⁵⁴ only 6.8 per cent of the respondent reported that they were still employed as compared to before lockdown measures were introduced. More than a half (58.6 per cent) of respondents who were employed before the crisis indicated to have lost their entire income. A study on the pandemic's impacts on Jordanian enterprises (one year after the first lockdown was introduced) conducted by the UNDP, ILO and Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research⁵⁵, highlighted the COVID-19 pandemic having had negative impacts on enterprises of all sizes, and across all sectors. However, it has been particularly harmful to micro and small businesses. Informal workers have faced the greatest burden, exacerbating

vulnerabilities. Informal daily wage workers — comprising a large proportion of the workforce in the construction, agriculture, and tourism sector — were not able to benefit from social security payments. As economic conditions continue to deteriorate and livelihoods opportunities shrink, short-term COVID-19 assistance provided to vulnerable refugees has provided temporary relief. The government's commitments to increase social security enrolment (in particular for self-employed and informal workers), to support flexible work permits for refugees and to increase access to digital financing will be critical, for refugee and vulnerable host community members alike, to counteract these negative trends. From a policy perspective, advocacy efforts will be needed to emphasize the criticality of lower skilled workers' (especially women's) re-entry into the labour market and increasing economic opportunities, both of which also contribute to fortifying social cohesion.

The number of PRS in Jordan has remained relatively stable over recent years, with 18,164 PRS individuals recorded by UNRWA as of June 2021. The number of PRS in Jordan is expected to remain stable in the coming months, with low numbers of returns to Syria. The COVID-19 outbreak has exacerbated existing socio-economic distress among vulnerable Palestine refugees, including PRS, refugees enrolled with the UNRWA Social Safety Net Programme (SSNP), and "ex-Gazan" refugees. More PRS, a group already facing widespread poverty, are at risk of slipping into poverty. Conditions in the King Abdullah Park (KAP) refugee reception facility near Irbid hosting 637 PRS remain of particular concern, with movement restrictions and the risk of refolement affecting the well-being of the already vulnerable refugees there.

COVID-19 has been a catalyst for the Government to put resilience back at the core of the Jordan Response Plan, encouraging a mid-to-term approach to self-reliance for all. It will be critical to ensure further support the Government to continue building resilient systems to better respond to the needs of all vulnerable communities.



Factors such as gender, age and disability affect refugees' ability to **access rights and services** with persons

with disabilities and older people often facing barriers in their environment that prevent them from accessing and using services on an equal basis with others. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought additional challenges as even before the outbreak persons with disabilities were less likely to access education, healthcare and livelihoods opportunities or participate in their community. **Refugee children with disabilities** who already faced significant education gaps in comparison with their peers without disabilities prior to the pandemic have been disproportionately impacted by school closures and switch to remote modalities with many refugee families expressing concern about learning losses.



While global estimates suggest that 15% of world's population experience some form of disability, in situations

of forced displacement the incidence of disability is expected to be even higher owing to an increased number of persons with injuries, lack of access to quality medical services and the creation of new environmental barriers. In Jordan, the 2019 Vulnerability Assessment Framework found that 21% of Syrian refugees surveyed had at least one disability and 45% of Syrian households surveyed had one or more members with at least one disability.

Iraq

TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS, AND STATELESS PERSONS IN NEED

289,716

TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIANS IN NEED

247,549

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOST COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN NEED

231,938



84% of refugee households report being **in debt** with an average debt of 1,869,000 IQD.

The main reasons for taking debt are food, basic household expenditures (rent and utilities) and healthcare.



Among households that required **access to health services**, 53% reported experiencing barriers or difficulties

accessing these services. The main barriers reported are the cost of the medical services and medicines needed.



38% of school-aged children are **not attending school**. The main reasons mentioned why children are not

attending school are **not being able to cover the costs** connected with school attendance and **unwillingness** to participate in education.



On average, more than 95% of refugee households have **access to adequate handwashing facilities**,

sufficient soap/disinfectant at the time of the interview and appropriate menstrual hygiene items (for households with female members). 97% of refugee households live in a house or apartment (average reported size of these living space were 100 m²) and 100% of the households reported having electricity.

Iraq has faced various challenges in 2021, including the pressured political climate in general, elections, negative economic trends further exacerbated by COVID-19, and challenges facing the protection environment in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) where the vast majority of Syrians in Iraq reside.

Through this, the population of refugees and asylum seekers in remained largely stable though 2021. Verified cases of spontaneous return have decreased, from 8,508 in 2020 to 3,021 in 2021, due to increased insecurity and economic downturn in Northeast Syria and relaxations of COVID-19 restrictions in KR-I. Furthermore, preliminary findings from the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) in 2021 found that 94% of Syrians did not intend to move from their existing location in the next 3 months.

Given these trends, the 3RP strategy in Iraq continues to focus on local integration and the inclusion of refugees into national systems and public services, in close collaboration with the Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).

The compounded effects of the pandemic, wider economic challenges, and the devaluation of the Iraqi Dinar has led to an overall deterioration of the socio-economic status of Iraq and refugees alike. Early findings from the 2021 MSNA confirm that economic vulnerability lies at the core of most needs of refugee households. Some 93 per cent of households reported that they have less income than prior to COVID-19. This primarily results from a lack of labour opportunities, reported as the main problem among respondents. Unemployment and lack of labour participation is particularly a problem among women and youth and in areas within the unemployment rates are also reportedly higher for Syrian refugees than

host community members, with just 59 per cent of Syrian refugee households reporting access to income-generating opportunities. These problems are also exacerbated by gender inequalities, whereby only 4 per cent of households report at least one female worker in the family compared with 89 per cent reporting at least one male member currently working.

While refugees have de facto access to work in KR-I and participate mainly in the informal economy, the lack of comprehensive legal framework on refugees' rights present barriers not only in relation to refugee access to decent job opportunities and improved working conditions but also on their access to employment, financial, and social protection services. Further advocacy for the socio-economic inclusion of refugees is required.

Based on the socioeconomic decline, national poverty rates climbed to 31.7 per cent from 20 per cent in 2018. This affects the ability of households to cover costs related to their needs, such as renting adequate accommodation, purchasing food, ensuring children's school attendance, and accessing adequate healthcare services, while also instigating harmful coping mechanisms such as heavy reliance on debt. 84 per cent of households reported being in debt to cover basic needs such as food, rent, and healthcare and to make up for lost income during COVID-19. These trends have led to refugees seeking relocation to camps, increasing the risk of dependence on humanitarian assistance

In regard specifically to food, WFP Food Security Outcome Monitoring (FSOM) in September 2021 indicated a decrease by 8 per cent in the acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS) for non-beneficiary refugees, with male-headed households eating better than female-headed households. While 18 per cent of refugee households have high or very high Food Expenditure Share (FES) - a 5 per cent increase compared to December 2020 -, 50 per cent of female-headed HHs reported that WFP cash assistance is their main income source.

In regard to services, while greater financial investment is needed, the majority of basic primary and secondary health services continued to be delivered to refugees both in and out of camps. However, given the low rate of vaccination among refugee populations, ongoing advocacy efforts to include refugees in the national vaccination campaign are a priority alongside supporting the Department of Health (DoH) with awareness and mobilization activities. Meanwhile, with 83 per cent of households reporting increased stressed levels due to COVID-19, additional investment in MHPSS is also needed.

While the availability of essential WASH services and infrastructure such as desludging, water trucking, and garbage collection continued through 2021, funding gaps in the WASH sector presented major challenges in 2021. This raises concerns over the sustainability and maintenance of water supply, waste management, and sanitation service provision in camps in 2022. To address capacity issues, the WASH sector is working on a transitional plan to shift from the direct provision of hygiene items and services to a market-based approach and transition to government-led services in some camps.

Risks for WASH sector will also be exacerbated in 2022 by environmental issues, with severe drought conditions and flash floods predicted due to climate change. Decreased rainfall combined with dams in Turkey and diminishing flow rates in the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Iran are causing dramatic signs of water scarcity, which could lead to harmful coping mechanisms. Outbreaks of waterborne diseases, such as acute watery diarrhoea and cholera, could have a significant impact on refugees.

Regarding protection, rising concerns have been identified in Federal Iraq due to increase in detention of Syrians for violations of GoI residency regulations, mainly as a consequence of missing and expired documentation. Furthermore, the absence of an effective legal framework for refugee protection in Iraq continues to preclude longer-term residency rights and other legal benefits for Syrian refugees. Protection activities will continue to focus on conducting protection monitoring, registration, legal assistance, capacity building of social services, and ongoing advocacy efforts on policy and legal reform to strengthen the protection environment in Iraq and KR-I.

Regarding child protection and GBV concerns, dropping out of school, child labour, child marriage, increased cases of domestic violence including intimate partner violence, and child neglect and abuse all remain serious issues. Meanwhile, major gaps remain in availability of safe shelters for survivors, awareness raising on reporting mechanisms, and access to livelihood opportunities. For children, gaps have been identified in local capacities to identify and respond to child protection concerns. Due to COVID-19, refugee children have increased mental health and psychosocial and education needs, particularly those whose education has been disrupted due to lack of access to remote/distance-learning during the pandemic.

Lastly, for education, low enrolment of students in remote learning has been amplified by the pandemic due to low access to smart devices and internet, alongside limited parental capacity to support. Support was provided to the KRG Ministry of Education to produce new education content for online and offline use and to train the Department of Education personnel and teachers on distance and e-learning platforms. Education programmes focus on ongoing advocacy for the approval and implementation of the Refugee Integration Policy to shift away from a parallel education system, enhance access to safe, inclusive, and quality education for all children by strengthening the national systems, and ensure a longer-term strategy and the integration of children into the KR-I education system. Further investment is required to support construction and rehabilitation of schools.



Hadia, local villager in Al Qaim district, Iraq

Sustaining agriculture and farming in many villages of rural Iraq has been challenging due to the lack of water supply. Without access to clean water, individuals and communities cannot lead a healthy and decent quality of life.

Photo by UNDP Iraq

Egypt

TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS, AND STATELESS PERSONS IN NEED

300,000

TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIANS IN NEED

149,497

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOST COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN NEED

2,171,200



39.6 % (rate higher in urban areas where most refugees live) of refugees are considered **poor** and **poverty is less prevalent among Syrian refugees.**



Refugees with disabilities face the common barriers of language, poor referrals, costly secondary and

tertiary healthcare, in addition to disability specific challenges.



9 % of refugees aged 18 years and above are **illiterate**, 57 % have primary or preparatory education,

and approximately 12 % have higher education. Disaggregation by strata, less than 5 % of **Syrian refugees** 18 years and more are illiterate, while this per centage increased to 14 % among other refugees.

As of November 2021, 258,862 refugees and asylum-seekers from 58 different nationalities are registered in Egypt, including 130,085 Syrian refugees.

Refugees primarily live in urban areas, mostly in overcrowded accommodations with inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, the majority of Syrian refugees were also considered socio-economically vulnerable. Factors contributing to increasing vulnerability included increase in cost of living, legal and administrative barriers to formal employment and inadequate access to finance services.

Even before the spread of the virus, two-thirds of Syrian refugees reported that they faced difficulties in meeting their basic needs and were dependent on humanitarian assistance to meet them (36 per cent receive monthly humanitarian cash assistance and 58 per cent receive food vouchers). Constraints related to residency, labour policies and their implementation, as well as challenging market conditions have also compelled many refugees to engage in informal labour in order to meet the basic needs of their families. Furthermore, according to UNHCR Egypt’s latest study, while Syrian businesses have contributed considerably to local economic development, the situation for many remains uncertain due to challenges in gaining the required approvals and operational licenses.

The situation worsened with COVID-19, with assessment data indicating that the majority of Syrian refugees (77 per cent) continue to have income disruptions due to mandatory reductions in working hours and/or job dissolution following the pandemic outbreak. As a result, many refugees and asylum-seekers are now unable to meet basic needs, pay rent

and afford housing cost. In fact, almost half of the households (46.9 per cent) suffer from not having enough food, and 87 per cent of these attribute this to insufficient money. Sixty-two point six per cent of refugees were found vulnerable to food insecurity due to poor dietary intake and/or limited economic capacity to access food. Refugees’ vulnerability is further exacerbated by increases in prices of commodities that they procure, with 63 per cent of such increases resulting from increased food prices. Consequently, nearly half of households had to adopt emergency coping strategies, such as begging or working in degrading exploitative jobs. Equally, many have adopted serious food consumption and livelihood coping mechanisms. Some 82.1 per cent of refugees were found to rely on less preferred foods. 62.8 per cent of refugees reduced the number and portions of meals per day, and 44.2 per cent had to reduce their adults’ food consumption to allow for children to eat. Furthermore, female headed households are particularly vulnerable to food insecurity. Support in this area is critical.

Women and girls face also acute and unique protection concerns, compounded by societal gender inequalities. A tailored humanitarian and development response must be considered in support of women and girls to help them strengthen participation, leadership and responsibilities, fundamental aspects for increasing social spending, accountability, and inclusion in favour of women. Likewise, meeting women’s basic needs can be supported in the long-term through increased access to recovery and livelihood opportunities, paired with

comprehensive protection services and support to the justice sector to promote accountability for gender-based violence.

In terms of education-related needs, COVID-19 has caused inadequate or unreliable access due to poor internet connectivity and/or a lack of devices (smart phone, tablet, television), incomplete online learning materials (not adequately covering all subjects), and lack of curricular assistance. Better support for these online educational modalities can begin to combat some of these educational needs.

In terms of healthcare needs, Egypt's healthcare system is in need of ongoing support to maintain resilience in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its knock-on effects on services such as the provision of medical supplies. The mental health of Syrian refugee children is also of serious concern. Syrian refugee children have been facing psycho-social issues for years even before the outbreak of COVID-19 and need effective mental health and psychosocial support. Since the mental wellbeing of Syrian refugee children has continued to deteriorate, and there is a particular need for specialized services for all boys and girls at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children, child spouses, and children with disabilities. Sufficient resources need to be allocated for community-based child protection services to address basic needs (predominantly housing rents and food, the costs of which have exponentially risen) and strengthen community and family support, access to case management, counselling, family visits and emergency cash-based interventions.



Egyptian host communities with the highest concentration of Syrian refugees are still vulnerable to instability, increased poverty, and unemployment.

Egypt remains a destination and transit country for refugees and asylum-seekers, with over 259,292 registered refugees and asylum-seekers, half of them being Syrians.

Photo by UNDP Egypt

LINKS & SOURCES

Title photo

UNHCR / Diego Ibarra Sánchez

Design

UNHCR / Julia Klement

Footnotes

¹ Syrian refugees include Syrians that are not registered with UNHCR in Lebanon, Palestine refugees from Syria and Palestine refugees in Lebanon.

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Raed

Syrian Refugee



Raed, a Syrian refugee from Raqqa, fled to Lebanon. His house was burned down due to a short circuit during a storm. Winter is getting harder for vulnerable people, both refugees and host communities, who can barely make ends meet.

UNHCR / Diego Ibarra Sánchez